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Green HRM: A New Trend in Human Resource Management Toward Sustainable Development

Tran Minh Nguyet
Hanoi University of Natural Resources and Environment, Vietnam

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Corresponding Author: **Tran Minh Nguyet**

Abstract

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) integrates environmental sustainability into HR policies and practices, aligning corporate strategy with ecological imperatives. This paper examines the concept and key components of GHRM, its drivers and challenges in implementation, and its link to sustainable development across economic, social, and environmental dimensions. We conduct a systematic review of academic literature and draw on illustrative case studies. The findings show that GHRM practices – such as green recruitment, training, performance management, compensation, and employee involvement – can enhance organizational sustainability by reducing waste, improving efficiency, and fostering pro-environmental behaviors among employees. Major drivers of GHRM include regulatory pressures, stakeholder and consumer expectations, competitive advantage, and growing environmental awareness. However, implementation barriers remain significant, including limited resources, low management competence, lack of incentives, and entrenched economic-centric culture. Empirical evidence (e.g. in the Spanish wine industry) indicates positive correlations between GHRM and triple-bottom-line performance, while cases (e.g. Philippine Airlines) highlight the need for comprehensive integration of HR systems with sustainability goals. The paper discusses how GHRM contributes to sustainable development by improving environmental performance (through resource efficiency and pollution reduction), economic performance (through innovation and cost savings), and social performance (through employee engagement and well-being). Practical implications suggest that organizations should embed green criteria across all HR functions and cultivate a supporting culture, while policymakers and researchers should address the identified gaps.

Keywords: Green Human Resource Management, Sustainability, Sustainable Development, Environmental Performance, HR Practices

Introduction

Growing global environmental challenges – such as climate change, resource depletion, and pollution – have created a compelling need for businesses to adopt sustainable practices. In this context, Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) has emerged as a new strategic orientation of HRM that explicitly incorporates environmental concerns into all aspects of managing people. GHRM is commonly defined as the integration of environmental management with traditional HRM policies and practices, with the aim of facilitating organizational sustainability. In practice, this means rethinking job design, recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and reward systems so that they align with "green" objectives. For example, GHRM may involve hiring candidates with pro-environmental values, providing employees with sustainability training, incorporating environmental criteria into performance reviews, and recognizing green behaviors in reward programs.

The adoption of GHRM is driven by multiple factors. As pollution rises and natural resources become scarcer, governments, customers, and other stakeholders increasingly pressure firms to operate in an environmentally responsible manner. Consequently, many companies now view sustainability as both a moral obligation and a source of competitive advantage. This shift means that traditional HR systems, once focused primarily on economic and operational goals, are under pressure to evolve. The literature suggests that GHRM can create a "win–win" situation: it can help firms meet environmental regulations and stakeholder expectations while simultaneously enhancing efficiency, reputation, and employee commitment.

At the same time, implementing GHRM poses significant challenges. Studies show that many organizations struggle with limited budgets, lack of expertise, low managerial interest, and short-term economic priorities that conflict with environmental goals. Understanding these barriers is essential to developing effective strategies for "greening" HRM.

This paper synthesizes the latest research on Green HRM, focusing on three core questions: (1) What are the key concepts and components of GHRM? (2) What drives or hinders its implementation in practice? (3) How does GHRM relate to sustainable development across environmental, economic, and social dimensions? We approach these questions through a comprehensive literature review, supported by empirical case examples. The goal is to provide a deep, up-to-date analysis suitable for international academic audiences.

Literature Review

Concept and Components of Green HRM

Green HRM is broadly conceptualized as a subfield of HRM and Sustainable HRM that deals specifically with environmental sustainability. It involves adopting "green" policies, practices, and systems that transform employees into "green employees" who contribute to the firm's sustainability goals. In other words, GHRM extends traditional HR functions by embedding ecological objectives into every stage of the employee lifecycle. A widely cited definition by Opatha and Arulrajah (as quoted in Faisal, 2023) [4] states that GHRM comprises "policies, practices, and systems that make employees of the organization green for the benefit of the individual, society, natural environment, and the business". This definition highlights the holistic impact of GHRM on people and planet, in addition to profit.

Researchers have identified several core components or practices of GHRM, typically organized around the main HR functions. These include (but are not limited to):

- Green Job Design and Analysis: Defining job roles, responsibilities, and environments in ways that incorporate environmental criteria. For example, positions might explicitly include duties related to reducing waste or improving energy efficiency. Environmentally-focused roles (e.g. sustainability officer) may be created within the organization.
- Green Recruitment and Selection: Recruiting and hiring employees with environmental awareness and green values. This may involve highlighting the company's green policies in job postings, using eco-friendly recruitment processes, and screening candidates for environmental commitment. Selecting applicants who already have green knowledge or motivation is considered crucial for achieving sustainability targets.
- Green Training and Development: Providing all employees (from frontline staff to managers) with training on sustainability, energy-saving, waste reduction, and other green skills. Training builds employees' abilities and knowledge to perform their jobs in an environmentally responsible way. For example, workers might learn about recycling protocols, efficient resource use, or the company's environmental mission. Regular "eco-training" is often cited as the most critical factor for making GHRM effective.
- Green Performance Management: Incorporating environmental criteria into performance appraisal and management systems. Employees and managers set green performance targets (such as reducing energy use or increasing recycling) and evaluate outcomes against these metrics. By holding individuals accountable for environmental outcomes, firms encourage continuous improvement in sustainability-related behaviors.
- Green Compensation and Reward: Aligning reward systems (salary, bonuses, promotions, recognition) with environmental objectives. This can include providing monetary or non-monetary incentives for meeting green goals (e.g. cash bonuses for reducing carbon footprints) or integrating eco-efforts into bonus structures. Social exchange theory suggests that such green rewards motivate employees to engage in pro-environmental actions at work.
- Green Employee Involvement: Actively involving employees in sustainability initiatives and decision-making. This includes encouraging green suggestions, forming cross-functional "green teams," and soliciting employee input on environmental practices. Firms may establish communication channels and forums for staff to participate in environmental problem-solving. Increased involvement leads to a stronger green culture and empowers employees to act as ambassadors of sustainability.

These components are often implemented in bundles, as part of an integrated GHRM strategy. The literature emphasizes that while any single practice can have an impact, the collective effect of multiple aligned practices tends to be greater on both employee behavior and organizational outcomes.

Drives of GHRM Implementation

Organizations adopt Green HRM for various strategic and normative reasons. A prominent driver is regulatory and policy pressure: governments worldwide are enacting stricter environmental regulations and sustainability standards, prompting firms to green their operations. Compliance with laws (e.g. emissions targets) and adherence to voluntary standards (like ISO 14001) require corresponding changes in management practices, including HR policies.

Stakeholder and market pressures also play a key role. Customers, investors, and civil society increasingly value corporate environmental responsibility. Demonstrating a strong sustainability record can enhance brand image and competitiveness. GHRM helps signal a company's commitment to these concerns by institutionalizing green principles within the workforce. For example, using green recruitment practices can attract talent who care about the environment, thus serving as a form of employer branding.

Internal strategic factors motivate GHRM as well. Firms recognize that environmentally friendly HR practices can improve operational efficiency and cost savings (through reduced waste, energy use, and paper consumption). These economic incentives make GHRM attractive from a business perspective. Moreover, incorporating sustainability into human capital management can foster innovation: motivated employees may generate new green products or processes that open up markets.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) commitments drive GHRM too. Companies with CSR policies often extend these to their human resources. By aligning HRM with CSR, firms reinforce an ethical culture and meet the expectations of socially responsible stakeholders.

In summary, key drivers for implementing GHRM include:

- Environmental and regulatory mandates: Legal requirements and environmental risk management that compel firms to reduce ecological impact.
- Competitive advantage and innovation: Recognizing sustainability as a source of differentiation, cost reduction, and new opportunities.
- Stakeholder demands: Pressures from customers, investors, and communities for greener operations, which GHRM helps address.
- Internal strategic goals: Desire to improve corporate reputation, employee engagement, and alignment with CSR objectives.
- Employee values: The increasing preference of employees (especially younger workers) for employers that demonstrate environmental responsibility.

These forces have led many organizations to reorient their HR function as part of a broader sustainability strategy.

Challenges and Barriers to GHRM

Despite the clear drivers, many firms face implementation challenges when trying to "green" their HRM. Empirical studies identify several recurrent barriers. Bombiak's survey of Polish companies found that *limited financial resources* was the most significant obstacle to GHRM adoption. Budget constraints make it difficult to invest in new training programs or green technologies. Similarly, *lack of incentives* (e.g. no rewards for sustainability efforts) reduces employee motivation to support green initiatives.

Another key barrier is *low management competence and commitment to sustainability*. If HR managers and executives lack knowledge about environmental issues or do not prioritize them, GHRM efforts will flounder. Bombiak (2020) [2] notes that low sustainable-HRM competency among managers hindered GHRM implementation in Poland. This often relates to organizational culture: firms with a strong economic-orientation and short-term profit focus (an "economic values" culture) struggle to embrace environmental considerations.

Other challenges include:

- **Employee resistance to change:** Workers may see new green practices as burdensome or irrelevant to their job, leading to pushback. Changing long-standing routines (e.g. moving from paper-based to digital processes) can provoke skepticism.
- **Lack of awareness and training:** If employees and managers do not understand *why* GHRM matters, implementation stalls. Organizations need to educate staff about the benefits of going green.
- **Measurement and accountability issues:** Companies often lack clear metrics to assess the impact of GHRM, making it hard to justify or reward initiatives. Without robust performance indicators, GHRM can be deprioritized.
- **Coordination difficulties:** GHRM requires collaboration across HR, operations, and sustainability departments. Siloed structures can impede the integration of environmental goals into HR systems.

In practice, these barriers mean that many GHRM practices remain sporadic or symbolic in organizations. For instance, Alegre (2025) [1] finds that Philippine Airlines had institutionalized green recruitment and training, but its performance appraisal and employee involvement mechanisms were not consistently aligned with environmental goals. This reflects a common pattern: "ability"-enhancing practices (recruitment, training) may be easier to implement, while aligning evaluation and rewards with green objectives is more difficult.

Overall, removing these barriers requires top-level commitment, capacity-building, and cultural change. As Bombiak suggests, raising managerial awareness of the importance of GHRM and providing incentives can broaden its implementation scope.

Methodology

This study is based on a systematic review of the literature on Green HRM and sustainable development. We searched major academic databases (Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar) for peer-reviewed articles, conference proceedings, and reputable reports using keywords such as "Green HRM", "sustainable HRM", "environmental management HRM", and "sustainability in HR". We included empirical studies, reviews, and conceptual papers published in English up to 2025. Out of the retrieved papers, we selected the most relevant contributions by focusing on those appearing in high-quality journals or indexed in Scopus/Web of Science, ensuring a global coverage of both developed and emerging economies.

The selected literature was analyzed thematically. We first extracted definitions and components of GHRM to synthesize the concept. Then we identified recurring themes regarding drivers and barriers of GHRM implementation. We also examined studies linking GHRM practices to organizational performance. When available, illustrative case examples were noted to provide real-world context.

No primary data were collected for this paper; instead, we rely on the aggregated findings of the reviewed studies. In line with good practice for literature reviews. we aimed for triangulation by cross-verifying information across sources to reduce bias. The combination of multiple studies and cases helps ensure that the conclusions reflect widely observed patterns rather than isolated instances.

Findings and Analysis

Defining Green HRM and Its Rationale

The literature consistently portrays GHRM as an organizational strategy to integrate ecological objectives into human resource management. In effect, GHRM transforms HR from a traditionally profit-focused function into one that also values environmental stewardship. According to Faisal (2023) [4], GHRM "is a discipline that combines environmental aspects with HRM policies and practices, thereby facilitating sustainability". This underscores that the *intent* of GHRM is to embed sustainability into the fabric of HR.

Researchers trace the origins of GHRM back to calls in the 1990s for proactive environmental management. Over the past two decades, GHRM has been recognized as one of the key subfields of sustainable HRM, along with considerations of social equity (e.g. diversity, ethics). The rationale is that HR systems shape employee behavior, so green HR practices can incentivize workforce-wide eco-friendly behavior. By turning ordinary employees into "green employees," organizations aim to reduce their ecological footprint while maintaining business performance.

Different scholars have emphasized related motivations. For example, Renwick *et al*. (2021) apply the Ability–Motivation–Opportunity (AMO) model to GHRM and argue that HR practices should develop employees' *green abilities* (knowledge and skills), *motivation* (incentives and values), and *opportunities* (organizational support) to perform environmentally responsible behaviors. This theoretical lens suggests that all GHRM practices ultimately serve to create a workforce capable and inclined to achieve sustainability goals. Indeed, Renwick (2008) and others have noted that green recruitment, training, appraisal, rewards, and engagement collectively build the AMO drivers for a pro-environmental workforce.

Drivers for GHRM Adoption

Our review confirms that external and internal pressures both drive the adoption of GHRM. The *external environment* is a powerful influence: widespread awareness of climate change and resource limits has made sustainability a board-level issue in many organizations. Legislators and regulators now demand cleaner production and reduced emissions, forcing companies to reassess all business functions, including HR, from an environmental perspective. In the Spanish context, Montalvo-Falcón *et al.* (2023) [5] note that resource scarcity and regulatory demands have made sustainability a top priority, spurring wineries to adopt ecological measures.

Market and stakeholder expectations also serve as drivers. Consumers increasingly reward "green" companies, and investors factor ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) criteria into their decisions. By adopting GHRM, firms can signal their green credentials to these stakeholders. Employees themselves are stakeholders: studies find that many job candidates (especially from younger generations) prefer employers with strong environmental practices. Green recruitment can therefore improve talent attraction and retention. The Philippine Airlines case illustrates this – the airline's emphasis on environmental criteria in hiring and training is seen as a way to build a sustainability-minded workforce that aligns with corporate values.

From an *internal strategy* perspective, organizations recognize that GHRM can yield multiple business benefits. Green practices often reduce costs (e.g. less energy/paper usage) and improve efficiency. They can also stimulate innovation: an engaged workforce may develop new eco-friendly products or processes that open up markets. Indeed, Montalvo-Falcón *et al*. (2023) [5] discuss how GHRM can improve economic performance by fostering operational efficiencies (like teleworking and clean technology adoption). Similarly, green training and involvement can boost employee creativity and lead to process improvements. Moreover, a strong green HR strategy can enhance corporate reputation and brand loyalty, thus indirectly boosting market performance.

In sum, the drivers of GHRM include a mix of environmental necessity and strategic opportunity. Government regulations, stakeholder pressures (including investors, customers, and employees), competitive positioning, and internal CSR goals create a compelling case for integrating environmental concerns into HRM.

Challenges to GHRM Implementation

Despite the motivations, many companies struggle to translate GHRM concepts into practice. As Bombiak (2020) [2] reports, the most common barriers are financial and cultural. Limited budgets constrain investment in new green initiatives (e.g. eco-training programs or energy-efficient workspaces). Without sufficient funds, even well-intentioned GHRM plans remain under-resourced. Likewise, if sustainable actions are not linked to tangible incentives, employees may not prioritize them. Bombiak finds that "lack of incentives to engage in environmentally friendly activities" was a major impediment.

A related barrier is *managerial capacity*. Organizations often find that HR and line managers lack the expertise to design and implement green policies. Bombiak's survey highlights "low competencies of the management with respect to sustainable HRM" as a key obstacle. This skill gap means that even if senior leadership supports GHRM, middle managers may not know how to operationalize it. Furthermore, if top executives continue to emphasize short-term economic goals, environmental initiatives may be sidelined. Bombiak notes that a "culture based on economic values" (i.e. profit-first mindset) can inhibit the uptake of green practices.

Other recurring challenges include:

- **Resistance to change:** Employees and managers may be skeptical about the relevance of green initiatives, viewing them as burdensome or costly. Overcoming ingrained habits (such as excessive printing or business travel) requires strong change management.
- **Awareness and education gaps:** Without awareness of environmental issues and GHRM's benefits, staff may not see the point of altering their behavior. Training and communication are needed first steps.
- **Lack of integration:** Green practices often remain isolated projects rather than systemically embedded. For instance, Alegre (2025) [1] observes that at Philippine Airlines, while green hiring and training were adopted, *performance management and employee involvement in sustainability were not aligned*, leading to inconsistent application of GHRM. This suggests that piecemeal adoption can limit overall effectiveness.
- **Measurement difficulties:** Companies may struggle to define key performance indicators (KPIs) for HR-related environmental outcomes. Without clear metrics, it is hard to track progress or link GHRM to business results.

In practice, these barriers mean that GHRM remains uneven. The literature calls for stronger organizational support, including dedicated resources, clear incentives, and comprehensive communication, to overcome these challenges. Only when culture, competencies, and systems change together can GHRM move beyond symbolic gestures to real sustainability impact.

Link between GHRM and Sustainable Development

Green HRM is ultimately meaningful because of its impact on sustainable development outcomes. Sustainable development is commonly defined as meeting current economic, social, and environmental needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. This triple-bottom-line perspective (often framed as environmental, economic, and social pillars) is now a guiding paradigm for business strategy. GHRM contributes to all three pillars, as evidenced by recent studies.

Environmental Dimension: GHRM directly targets environmental performance by reducing waste and emissions. For example, green training and awareness empower employees to use resources more efficiently (e.g. conserving energy, minimizing waste). Teleworking and green commuting initiatives (as HR policies) can cut carbon footprints. Performance management with environmental KPIs ensures continuous improvement in eco-metrics. Research shows that GHRM practices correlate with measurable environmental gains. In the Spanish wineries study, Montalvo-Falcón *et al*. (2023) [5] found that firms with stronger GHRM reported improved environmental performance (e.g. better energy and waste management). Similarly, compiling multiple studies, the literature review by Baloch *et al*. (2025) indicates that green practices create a pro-environmental culture that helps organizations control their ecological impact.

Economic Dimension: Although GHRM has an ecological focus, it also yields economic benefits. By fostering resource efficiency, GHRM can lower operating costs. The same Spanish study reports that GHRM is positively associated with economic performance, meaning higher profitability and productivity. Mechanisms include innovation (employees suggest new products or processes that generate revenue), reduced absenteeism (healthier work environments), and improved brand that attracts customers. GHRM can even help firms access green financing and subsidies. Importantly, linking HR systems to sustainability can strengthen competitive advantage. Montalvo-Falcón *et al*. note that GHRM helps wineries gain market distinctiveness and agility in the face of climate challenges.

Social Dimension: GHRM also impacts social and human aspects of sustainability. Engaging employees in meaningful environmental work tends to boost job satisfaction, morale, and organizational commitment. When workers see their employer taking social responsibility seriously, they often reciprocate with loyalty. For instance, companies that implement green reward programs and involve staff in green teams typically report higher levels of employee engagement (a key social sustainability indicator. Green HR policies (e.g. safe, healthy, and sustainable workplaces) also contribute to community well-being. By enforcing diversity and inclusion along with green policies, GHRM can extend social benefits beyond the firm. In the Spanish study, enhanced social performance (e.g. employee well-being and community relations) was one of the three positively impacted areas by GHRM.

Empirical evidence supports these multidimensional links. As noted, Montalvo-Falcón *et al*. (2023) [5] find significant positive relationships between the strength of GHRM practices and firms' economic, environmental, and social performance simultaneously. They describe a "virtuous circle" whereby sustainable HRM enables long-term benefits: improved efficiency (economic), reduced environmental footprint (environmental), and a motivated workforce (social) reinforce each other.

Beyond one sector, the review of various studies shows a consistent pattern: organizations with integrated GHRM systems tend to achieve better overall sustainability outcomes than those without. In summary, the findings align with sustainability theory: GHRM is a critical "missing link" that helps translate environmental goals into employee action, thereby advancing the broader agenda of sustainable development.

Empirical Illustrations

To ground these insights in practice, we highlight two recent studies from different contexts.

In Spain's wine industry, a sector facing acute environmental pressures (climate change, water scarcity), Montalvo-Falcón *et al*. (2023) [5] surveyed 196 wineries on their HR and sustainability practices. Using structural equation modeling, the authors found that firms with more extensive GHRM activities reported higher economic, social, and environmental performance. In other words, greening the HRM system was significantly related to better triple-bottom-line results. The study emphasizes mechanisms such as efficiency improvements (e.g. less waste, telecommuting) and talent management (attracting environmentally conscious employees) as key to this effect.

In the service sector, Alegre (2025) [1] conducted a detailed case study of Philippine Airlines' GHRM practices. This mixed-method study (survey plus interviews) revealed that the airline had institutionalized *ability-building* GHRM practices specifically, environmental values in recruitment and targeted green training more so than *opportunity-building* or *motivation-building* mechanisms. Performance appraisal systems did not yet fully integrate sustainability criteria, and formal employee participation in environmental decision-making was inconsistent. The qualitative feedback from employees indicated a need for clearer communication of environmental goals and structured involvement channels. These findings underscore that partial adoption of GHRM (focusing on training and hiring) can create momentum, but without cohesive performance management and engagement, the strategic impact is limited.

Together, these cases illustrate the literature's key points: GHRM can produce tangible sustainability benefits, but its full potential is realized only when supported by a comprehensive HR framework. The Spanish wine study provides broad quantitative evidence of GHRM's effectiveness, while the Philippine Airlines case offers granular insight into implementation gaps. Both reinforce that Green HRM is not merely an ethical add-on but a strategic resource: by leveraging human capital in alignment with ecological goals, companies can pursue sustainable development more effectively.

Discussion

The foregoing analysis suggests that GHRM is a pivotal bridge between traditional HRM and sustainability objectives. Conceptually, it integrates well with established HR theories. As Renwick (2008) and colleagues have noted, the AMO framework helps explain GHRM's mechanisms: green HR practices develop employees' *Abilities* (through training), *Motivation* (through incentives and values), and *Opportunities* (through engagement) to act sustainably. Our review confirms this triadic effect: for example, green recruitment enhances green ability by selecting knowledgeable candidates, green rewards boost green motivation, and green involvement provides opportunities for employees to contribute ideas. From a resource-based view, human capital is a key intangible asset; making that asset "sustainable-aware" gives firms a competitive edge that is hard to imitate.

At the same time, our findings identify clear gaps in theory and practice. Empirically, much of the evidence so far comes from surveys or case studies in specific industries. Longitudinal or experimental research is scarce, so causal links between GHRM and performance need further validation. Conceptually, the literature still lacks a unified framework for GHRM. Different studies emphasize different components (some focus on training and recruitment, others on rewards), and there is no consensus on which bundle of practices is most effective in which context. Our review highlights the need for more systematic models that account for contextual factors (e.g. industry, culture) in determining GHRM impact.

On the practical side, organizations should heed the lesson that GHRM must be coherent and supported at all levels. The case of Philippine Airlines shows that partial adoption (e.g. only training and hiring) may create momentum but ultimately leaves performance management and engagement processes untouched. For GHRM to influence all three sustainability dimensions, firms must align HR policies consistently. This involves top-management commitment (to overcome resource constraints) and grassroots involvement (to build employee buy-in). HR professionals also need to develop new competencies in sustainability, so that green practices become part of the standard HR toolkit.

Policymakers and industry associations can facilitate GHRM by providing guidelines, standards, or incentives for green HR practices. For example, integrating GHRM criteria into sustainability reporting frameworks could motivate firms to track and disclose their human-centered eco-initiatives. Education and training institutions should prepare HR graduates with an understanding of environmental issues and green management techniques.

Overall, the evidence reviewed here suggests a virtuous synergy: firms that successfully implement GHRM not only contribute to society and the planet, but also enhance their own long-term viability. However, this synergy is conditional on overcoming the identified barriers. In practice, companies that remain “economy-centric” risk falling behind as stakeholders and regulations increasingly reward sustainability-aligned business models.

Conclusion and Implications

This paper has provided a comprehensive analysis of Green Human Resource Management as a strategic trend in contemporary HRM. We have shown that GHRM is defined by integrating environmental considerations into HR functions, with core components including green job design, recruitment, training, performance management, rewards, and employee involvement. Drivers for adopting GHRM range from regulatory and stakeholder pressures to competitive advantage and employee engagement. Conversely, challenges include limited resources, cultural inertia, and skill gaps.

Importantly, the link between GHRM and sustainable development is strongly supported. GHRM practices help organizations meet the demands of environmental sustainability by reducing resource use and pollution. They also promote economic sustainability by enhancing efficiency, innovation, and long-term performance. Socially, GHRM fosters employee well-being, engagement, and organizational commitment, contributing to the social pillar of sustainability. Empirical cases in diverse sectors (e.g. wine manufacturing, aviation) demonstrate that when GHRM is systematically applied, organizations tend to improve on all three sustainability dimensions.

For practitioners, the implication is clear: HR departments should be active partners in corporate sustainability strategies. This means crafting HR policies with green criteria (e.g. eco-skills in job descriptions, environmental metrics in performance reviews) and ensuring these are as rigorously managed as financial or operational targets. Leaders should recognize that investing in GHRM – through training, rewards, and involvement – pays off in more resilient, engaged organizations that are better equipped for a sustainable economy.

For policymakers, encouraging GHRM could take the form of voluntary standards or incentives (tax breaks, subsidies) for firms that demonstrate holistic sustainability efforts. Given the early stage of GHRM diffusion, there is also scope for public–private collaboration to develop best-practice frameworks.

For researchers, this review highlights several directions. There is a need for more empirical work across industries and regions to validate the generality of current findings. Interdisciplinary studies could examine how GHRM interacts with other green supply chain and corporate governance practices. Additionally, research should refine measures of social and economic sustainability in the context of HRM.

In summary, Green HRM represents a promising convergence of human resource management and sustainable development. By reorienting how people are managed to align with ecological priorities, organizations can contribute to a greener economy while also enhancing their own long-term success. While challenges remain, the growing body of evidence suggests that GHRM is more than just a trend – it is a necessary evolution of HR practice in the 21st century.

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