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ENVIRONMENTAL ACCOUNTING AS A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY IN CROATIAN COMPANIES

ABSTRACT

Sustainability has become a term that applies in all aspects of life. Ecology and sustainability are present today in all aspects of life, including in accounting for modern business organizations. The progress of society and industry leads to serious problems for the conservation of natural habitats and ecological conditions of life. Therefore, it raises the question of what companies, management and regulatory bodies can do to preserve the environment in the present but also in the future. The key role in such a way of monitoring the environment is to have systems of measurement and recording of adverse impacts on the environment. One of such systems of measurement and recording of environmental protection, indexing, organization and management of data, the provision of environmental information through physical or monetary indicators is an environmental accounting system. Environmental accounting is an indispensable tool for the application of the concept of sustainable development and is mandated as a means to measure environmental conservation and / or measurement of environmental impacts to increase company performance. That is, it is necessary to include environmental data and socially responsible business operations in the official reports of economic entities, as well as the implementation of such data in business plans. This paper wants to investigate the extent to which environmental accounting is carried out in Croatian companies and how much environmental accounting contributes to the creation of value-added enterprises and the achievement of profits.

Key words: *Environmental protection, environmental accounting, sustainable development strategy*

JEL: *R11, Q56*

1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development is a business practice that reflects the idea of meeting economic and environmental demands for the benefit of the wider community. The

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progress of society and industry leads to serious problems for the conservation of natural habitats and ecological conditions of life. Therefore, it raises the question of what companies, management and regulatory bodies can do to preserve the environment in the present but also in the future. The key role in such a way of monitoring the environment is to have systems of measurement and recording of adverse impacts on the environment. One of such systems of measurement and recording of environmental protection, indexing, organization and management of data, the provision of environmental information through physical or monetary indicators is an environmental accounting system. Environmental accounting is an indispensable tool for the application of the concept of sustainable development and is designated as a means to measure environmental conservation and / or measurement of adverse environmental impacts. The classic economic analysis instruments do not allow regulatory authorities and governing structures to take decisions to undertake reliable measures to implement environmental policy or to measure the impact of economic policy on the environment. Market saturation and higher environmental demands force companies to adapt their business processes and management strategies to the needs of the entire environment. In an effort to minimize the negative environmental impacts of the company, not only locally but globally, businesses are increasingly introducing a strategy of self-control over the environment. One of the most effective ways of managing that contributes to gaining benefits in the global marketplace and reducing the company's negative reputation is the application of environmental accounting. Sustainability has become a term that can be applied in all spheres of life and as such talks about maintaining a balance within a system. The term sustainable development is often referred to as long-term maintenance of prosperity for future generations, depending on the responsible use of natural resources (Vinšalek, 2017). Starting from the aforementioned objective of the research in this paper is to point to the role and significance of environmental accounting in the process of environmental protection management for the implementation of a sustainable development strategy as a prerequisite for improving business performance.

2. Development of environmental accounting

For the business of any company it is necessary to keep accounting records on business and financial activities. Accounting information is essential to owners, regulatory bodies, investors, creditors, as well as the company's own management. Management requirements are great when it comes to accounting systems since they decide on business development. The accounting system should provide them with information for planning, decision-making and business control (Kurtanović, 2012). Financial accounting provides information prepared for presentation to external

users, the information presented relates to the financial activities of a business organization. Over the years, specific rules have been adopted by professional accounting and regulatory bodies on the way that certain transactions should be made to ensure organization information is credible in the eyes of external stakeholders. Then another type of accounting, cost accounting, inventory value information was developed for inclusion in the annual financial statements. Cost accounting was adjusted from financial accounting to help control the movement of materials and raw materials within business organizations. Furthermore, management accounting has been developed separately to focus the focus on decision-making information in the management, planning and control of operations. The significance of these trends in accounting leads to sustainability accounting that can be developed in different ways (Gray and Bebbington, 2000):

- firstly, it is based on a completely new accounting system designed to promote a sustainability strategy
- second, as an extension or modification to management finance, price or costs

Environmental accounting is an attractive category because it allows a complete new assessment of the relative significance of social, environmental and economic benefits and risks and their interaction with the corporate accounting system, both for management and for external stakeholders. “Within ten years, environmental accounting has increased the number of user’s information threefold. First of all, the academic community, the progressive growth corporations as well as the regulatory bodies, while everyone has a common goal of improving environmental performance and sustainable development (Schaltegger and Roger, 2010: 376)”. Reporting on the environment is gaining importance from regulatory bodies. Sustainable accounting is currently expanded to accounting and reporting. Emphasis is on ecosystem accounting and accounting for the benefit of the wider community, consideration of eco justice and focus on efficiency and sustainability issues. With the development of the economy, scientific methods of tracking the movement of economic goods and their impact on the environment have evolved. Accounting has also been developed in this direction, so today we are talking about environmental accounting that takes on a more significant aspect in companies that are of great importance to the public reputation they realize by implementing a responsible business strategy. Sustainable accounting, environmental accounting has become a genetic concept (Lamberton, 2005). Given the increasing importance of sustainable development and environmental protection, a vague picture of related concepts such as sustainability accounting, financial sustainability accounting, environmental accounting, environmental management accounting, environmental management accounting etc. We have differentiate several definitions of environmental accounting, but are jointly identifying

them cost of (no) environmental protection. “In most cases sustainable accounting is used only as a second term for environmental accounting or environmental reporting (Lamberton, 2005:8)”. By introducing an increasing interest in environmental protection studies, all thoughts on environmental accounting have emerged (Schaltegger and Roger, 2010):

1. A philosophical debate on sustainability, where the key question poses a key issue of how environmental accounting contributes to sustainable development, or clouds and restricts management from taking the necessary steps towards sustainability
2. The second is a management perspective that examines the complexity of information related to different concepts and tools that will help the steps towards sustainability

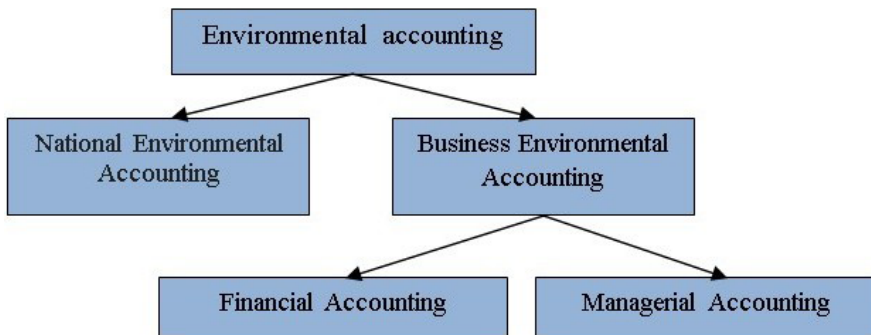
Particularly current problems in today’s world are environmental issues that require the realization of activities of economic entities and regulators in environmental conservation and quality of life, are observed through the interests of current generations, but also of future generations. Concrete solutions are sought in eco-management projects that set new goals both before enterprise management and cost accounting by setting new requirements for defining environmental costs.

3. Path Environmental Accounting Standards

More pronounced environmental problems and consequences of uncontrolled resource exploitation indicate the necessity of adequate management of natural resources. Some interest groups, as well as the society as a whole, show interest in information about depletion of natural resources, pollution of the natural environment, investments and ecological performance, which, before accounting and financial reporting, sets new tasks. Identification of environmental protection costs and then their measurement and reporting on investments and benefits, require the development of a specific methodological basis. In developed market economies countries have been talking about ecological accounting for more than a decade. Eco Accounting, Environmental Accounting, Green Accounting is a part of modern accounting that represents a unique approach to collecting, systematizing, recording and reporting on undertaken investment activities in the conservation of natural resources and environmental environments. As such, green accounting should provide adequate information as a basic platform for cost and benefit analysis of economic decision-making regarding future environmental activities of the enterprise. Integrating ecological aspects into traditional enterprise accounting without aggregating information at the macroeconomic level, as well as reverse situations, would have

narrowed the information base to the needs of economic making. The need for investment and ecological performance assessment at both national and regional levels, as well as in business organizations, is a result of increased environmental responsibility not only from the point of view of the enterprise but also the entire community.

Figure 1. Classification of environmental accounting



Source: Processing author by United States Environmental Protection Agency, 1995.

3.1. Environmental accounting at the macroeconomic level

The task of accounting at the macroeconomic level is to record information about the use and condition of renewable and non-renewable national natural resources. Reporting on the impact of business processes and environmental business activities is in charge of ecological accounting at the microeconomic level. Since eco costs are a key link in business decision making, their identification, valuation, systematization and accounting coverage are of paramount importance. Ecological management manages the company to reduce negative impacts on the environment while not neglecting the economic effects of the activities carried out. The information basis for making business decisions management lies above all in accounting information. Fore importance of improving ecological awareness and high eco-information requirements, there is an expectation that accounting at any moment on the requirements of managers is responsive to the relevant information on the amount of ecological costs and ecological performance, all with the aim of quality management of natural resources and making quality decisions for sustainable development.

3.2. Environmental accounting at the microeconomic level

Internal ecological accounting at the microeconomic level generates information on costs of environmental protection, environmental risks, production processes, eco products and the effects of eco-actions and supports business decision-making. As a consequence, the concept of modern environmental management accounting, reso-

urce accounting, information on the use, flow and energy, water, material and waste information has been developed to monitor their use efficiency and the potential for environmental improvement (Department of Energy USA, 2016). Basically environmental cost accounting is the identification of costs and their allocation to relevant products or other physical aspects of operating activities of the enterprise. Applying this concept of internally-oriented accounting ensures consistency between ecological and financial goals, pointing to the important fact of ecological improvements in business processes and the implementation of a sustainable development strategy and increasing financial performance. Environmental accounting is expected to identify and systematize environmental costs and link them to areas of responsibility, the places of costs and/or the corresponding production processes, activities or products that have caused them. All information provided by environmental accounting is the basis for future business decisions for the implementation of a sustainable development strategy, rational use of natural resources, improved eco-cost management, green technology investment and product development processes that include the ecological dimension.

3.3. Sustainable Enterprise Development Strategy

The issue of environmental protection or the influence of the company on the eco system is one of the dominant factors of possible business risk in all spheres of business conduct and the strengthening of responsibility for the resulting environmental damage. “The activity of a company or management in preventing adverse environmental impacts must be measurable and transparent (Shen, 1995:185).” This means that management can not only formally respect ecological regulations but must have a clearly defined strategy for the purpose of long-term value generation (Malinić et al., 2011). If an enterprise conducts a sustainable development strategy it implies a developed ecological awareness and sense of responsibility for enforcing legal regulations and a clearly defined vision of a sustainable development and growth enterprise.

The implementation of a sustainable development strategy implies environmental protection, planned systematic application of the protection approach, management and renewal of the eco system. “Under ecological management, we mean the effort taken by enterprise management to minimize negative environmental impacts of products and production processes during their life cycle (Klassen and McLaughlin, 1996:1199).” Ecological management implies the coordination of many disciplines within the enterprise by creating a cost-effective system that will guide and monitor production activities in accordance with ecological and economic requirements. Starting from the above mentioned management companies know that the modern

business conditions are integrating sustainable development in a business strategy, providing the company with a constant competitive advantage, through cost savings and court process protection. Through the management of business processes, the goals and directions of the company in environmental protection should be defined. It is extremely important that the company directs its programs and activities in the direction of environmental responsibility. Prior to making decisions on the adoption and implementation of environmental policy, enterprise management should consider the impact on the environment.

Integrating ecological management into enterprise management activities, including the inclusion of ecological policy as an integral part of business policy, requires the inclusion of a number of multifunctional activities: capital budgeting and budgeting, financial and non-financial performance measurement, budget control and product cost accounting. Multidisciplinary teams have a clear set of tasks and functions, both at institutional and operational level, as shown in Table 1 (Yakhou and Dorweiler, 2004).

Table 1. Integration of business policies and environmental protection policies

Business politics		Ecological policy
Institutional investors	MISSION	Constituting ecological policy Corporate sustainability
Business purpose	STATUS ANALYSIS	Ecological protection
Using resources (capital, labor, market)	GOALS	Responsibility towards ecological principles Preventing ecological degradation
Target performance by market locations	TASKS	Statutory policy Statutory standards
Approval with the maximum cost efficiency	STRATEGY	Consent within the standard and preservation of the environment
Supply chains and production Distributive channels	IMPLEMENTATION	Sustainability of resource usage community
Business mode set for maximum productivity	TACTICS	Using material resources, energy, other natural resources "green" product, process
Optimization of production with minimizing waste Business with permission	JOBS	Avoiding environmental violence (emissions of waste, discharges pollutants)
Finance reports Business reports	MONITORING AND CONTROL	Impact on the environment Volunteer initiative ecological reporting
Financial and management accounting	COMPATIBILITY AND TRANSPARENCY	Ecological accounting
Allocation of resources Correction of business tactics	STRATEGIC CHANGES	Self-Implementation of the Environ- mental protection strategy

Source: Processing author by Yakou and Dorweiler, 2004:67

Modern business models point to the growing need for environmental policy implementation in internal business policies and business strategies. However, the

question is whether voluntary ecological policy should be before legal regulations. The wider social public is of the same view that ecological and ecological performance is expected to be beyond legal regulation, so there are clear indications that ecological policy changes from legislative to voluntary as shown in Table 1.

It follows from the above that the goal of integrating ecological management into the management activities of the company is to reduce the company's negative impacts on the eco system and increase its ecological performance. Given that management activities have a conventional purpose in the enterprise hierarchy, integration takes on the form of coordination.

In order for the company to achieve integration it is essential for the environmental management to take the following steps (Wycherly, 1997):

- scans and monitors changes in the ecological context of the business
- identifies key information
- requires changes in ecological practice and performance
- follows information to enable compliance with regulatory regulations

Based on the above it can be concluded that successful enterprise management in modern and altered business conditions requires the management of the company to choose a new, original way of working and behavior and proactive thinking in order to protect the environment for the sake of a viable development.

4. Environmental accounting and sustainability

Environmental protection is a problem that is troubling the whole world and more than ever it is obvious that it has to change the attitude toward the environment. Legal regulations on environmental protection and environmental protection are often the basic and only reason why businesses are beginning to think about environmental protection. Due to the payment of environmental damage or penalties due to the environmental impact or the environmental incident of enterprises, the costs of environmental protection are beginning to be recorded. The principle of paying for environmental damage lies in the fact that every polluter has to pay for any environmental damage caused to the human environment and the eco system. This results in the need and moral obligation of all economic entities, especially those who are identified as major polluters, in planning, monitoring, recording and reporting on investment in the implementation of the environmental protection strategy, as well as reporting on the effects of implementing such a business policy. Environmental Accounting is a part of modern accounting, whose task is to provide management information for different hierarchical management levels, with a view to

assessing the economic impact of the application of relevant regulations, standards, and protocols, whose task is to promote sustainable development.

“Environmental accounting is defined as the process of identifying, collecting, assessing, analyzing, internal reporting and using information on materials and energy, environmental costs and other environmental decision making data (Vasile and Man, 2012:566).” “Environmental Accounting is a combined approach that allows you to transfer data from financial accounting, cost accounting and material accounting to increase the efficiency of material usage, reduce environmental impact as well as record environmental costs. It consists of a physical and financial component (Jasch, 2003:668).” Financial accounting is the part of accounting that is defined by law, in this case the Accounting Act. It is intended for external users and information is easily comparable due to standardization and harmonization of the system. Cost accounting, management accounting is not defined by law, it is intended exclusively for internal users, primarily for the purpose of making business decisions. While material accounting is defined as the most important part of the information system on the environment, data on the physical flow units of materials, water and energy within the defined system.

Environmental accounting does not only include costs for implementation or non-implementation of environmental protection, but also the financial effects of responsible operations and environmental protection, as well as the impact of financial information on material and energy flows.

5. Sustainable development and eco – efficiency

In today’s business world, companies are obliged to take care of environmental impacts are causing exploitation of resources to increase profits. The theory that emerged as a result of today’s business is the theory of eco-efficiency, which links economic performance and environmental related activities. An eco-efficiency theory that is considered to increase productivity and reduce costs while simultaneously improving environmental conservation activities. „Any negative impact on the environment or pollution is a form of economic inefficiency and therefore every effort to prevent these negative impacts is a positive outcome for productivity and reduction in costs (Burnett and Hansen, 2008:554).” There is a visible difference in the interpretation of efforts to reduce negative environmental impacts. For one, this is another in the range of a large number of costs and for others, this is how to reduce costs by reducing waste and emissions during production. Furthermore, it is considered that the combination of economic and ecological efficiency is eco – efficiency, whereby the value added value and changes in the added environmental impacts are added to the ratio (Buritt and Saka, 2006). Further research has led to the

claim that eco – efficiency and capital efficiency drivers are by no means inconsistent, but eco – efficiency is rising to a higher level, as environmental resources can be the source of new value alone (Figge and Hahn, 2013). This new thinking has led to the concept of sustainable value. Simplified, sustainable value exists in every company whose eco – efficiency is greater than the market leader or company that is currently being compared.

6. Environmental Accounting for Sustainable Growth and Development

The classic economic analysis tools do not allow enterprise management decisions to take reliable measures to implement environmental policy and sustainable development strategies. Management structures are in great demand for ways to raise business levels to a higher level and long term value creation for companies. In the modern business world, the role of environmental accounting is a clear tool that helps management in the long term sustainable development of a company. By implementing a sustainable development strategy, the company contributes to the public reputation in the economic market while on the other hand prevents the emergence of ecological disasters that may have major financial implications for the business of the company. Environmental accounting can be considered as covering all areas of accounting that can be influenced by business responses to environmental problems, risks or pressures for the purpose of sustainable growth and development.

7. Goals and hypotheses of research

The implementation of a sustainable development strategy is extremely important, especially as the fact that the Accounting Act clearly prescribes the preparation of financial statements including the environmental and social aspects of the business, the compilation of the Sustainability Report. Unfortunately, in practice, the situation is devastating, reflecting the availability of data for research implementation and getting data of implementation a sustainable development strategy. In developed countries around the world, the issue has been spoken for decades, but we are just waking up in the national economy and the topic is being studied actively and continuously, as evidenced by the Green Finance Study Group (2017). The goal of the paper is to see the importance of implementation a sustainable development strategy by applying environmental accounting not only for environmental conservation but also for economic progress and business performance improvement as well as impact on profitability. However, the fact that all actors in the economic system are interested in creating surplus value and profit, it is already known to everyone that profit is the driver of

enterprise development. Therefore, this paper aims to investigate how sustainable development strategies are implemented in Croatian companies by conducting environmental accounting and linking the implementation of such business practices with the creation of profits and economic added value. This paper presents a study aimed at demonstrating that environmental accounting as a sustainable development strategy is linked to profit making and value creation of companies.

The following hypotheses form the basis of this research:

H1 = There is a statistical significance of linking the implementation of environmental accounting with profit making of a company

H2 = There is a statistical significance of the relationship between environmental accounting implementation and the economic value added of a company

Conducting the research shows to prove to what extent companies take care of the environment and the impact of their business on the environment, in fact find out how much environmental accounting is implemented in Croatian companies. Accordingly, the following hypothesis was set:

H3 = Environmental accounting is sufficiently implemented in Croatian companies

8. Research methodology

The research described in this paper is based on empirical tests involving 98 companies listed on the Zagreb Stock Exchange. From the financial statements of the company (as of December 31, 2017.) included in the survey. Data was obtained on the dependent variables of profit and EVA. However, as environmental accounting as a tool difficult to measure as a variable, an anonymous survey among employees and enterprise management was carried out for this research, where it was not possible to rule out the bias of the answers to environmental accounting implementation issues. The survey included issues of sufficient integration of the ISO Environmental Standards, the needs for investments in environmental protection and environmental conservation, environmental accounting records and costs of environmental impact and the publication of information on the environmental impacts of the company on the environment publish information on the effects of the company's impact on the environment. Responses to the survey questionnaire generated a grade of one to five environmental accounting implementation for each enterprise. The aim of the research was to prove that environmental accounting as a sustainable development strategy is linked to the creation of profits and economic value added of enterprises. Then analysis was performed using correlation and regression in the statistical program SPSS Statistics. The companies involved were responses to the survey conducted.

The fact that the sustainability report was unavailable, despite the legal obligation to compile them, is an indispensable fact, reflecting the difficulty in obtaining information on the implementation of social responsibility and environmental accounting. The applied methodology for this research is in line with the available data, given the non-availability of Sustainability Report. Surveys for this research were conducted in confidence with absolute anonymity via e – mail, telephone or personal request. The data obtained for observed variables were processed in a statistical program based on which interpretation was performed. It was difficult to attract respondents to conduct the survey precisely because of non implementation and reporting on ecological and social sustainability on the basis of legal regulations. For Hypotheses H1 and H2 answering to the questions asked, a grade of 1 to 5 was generated for each individual company and placed in relation to the realized profit of the company and the economic value added for 2017. For the third hypothesis corresponding to the specific issue, it was found to find out the share of observed companies that implement the accounting records of the environmental costs completely, partially or not at all.

9. Research results

Based on the research conducted in Table 2, the results of the statistical significance analysis of correlation coefficient and regression of environmental accounting with generation profit.

Table 2. Statistical comparison of correlation coefficient and regression Enviro.acc. and Profit

Model Summary ^b										
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Dubin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	,347a	,185	,170	,366	,185	12,288	1	96	,001	2,021

a. Predictors: (Constant), Enviro.acco.

b. Dependent Variable: Profit

Source: Processing author

From the coefficient of correlation R in Table 2 we can see that the correlation between the variables exists (0.347), but it is small. The determination coefficient R² is closer to zero than the unit, so we can not speak of a good linearity of the model. F ratio is higher than the theoretical value because the samples are not from the same economic activity, on the basis of that with a given level of significance of 0.05 and with the number of degrees of freedom (1.96) we come to the conclusion that the

implementation of environmental accounting is partially but not significantly related to the realization of profit. Durbin-Watson has a value of 2 indicating that there is no auto correlation of relationship errors.

Table 3 shows the results of the statistical significance study of correlation coefficient and regression of environmental accounting and economic value added.

Table 3. Statistical comparison of correlation coefficient and regression Envito.acc. and EVA

Model Summary ^b										
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	,574 ^a	,323	,308	,762	,323	26,622	1	96	,000	2,175

a. Predictors: (Constant), Enviro.acco.

b. Dependent Variable: EVA

Source: Processing author

The correlation coefficient (0.574) shows that there is a correlation between environmental accounting variables and the achievement of the economic value added of a company. When we look at the F ratio, we see that the empirical F ratio is considerably higher than the theoretical value, which is consistent with the fact that the samples (surveyed companies) are not from the same population but from different activity activities, so the variability among the groups is significantly higher than that within the group, there is variation that is the result of the treatment effect, which results in differences between the groups. Therefore, the F ratio is greater than 1. However, with a given level of significance of 0.05 and a number of degrees of freedom (1.96), while Durbin-Watson has a value of about 2, which means that there is no correlation error autocorrelation, so we can say that visible connectivity is not negligible. From the survey conducted on the observed sample of 98 Croatian hypothesis research companies H3 – Environmental accounting has been sufficiently implemented in Croatian companies, the following data is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Implementation of environmental accounting in Croatian companies

Question	Reply		
	Yes	Partly	No
Environmental accounting is sufficiently implemented in your organization	23	64	11

From the results presented in Table 4, based on the survey conducted, it is apparent that 23,46 % of Croatian companies have implemented environmental accounting in their business. However, 66,32 % of respondents believe that environmental computing is not sufficiently implemented in their companies. Therefore, it is assumed that in the near future the implementation of environmental accounting will be more represented, primarily because of the benefits it brings.

10. CONCLUSION

Contemporary companies on the global market are increasingly exposed to the environmental demands of the wider community. Consequently, environmental accounting becomes an important management dimension. In the practical application of environmental accounting, there are a number of problems in identifying costs for environmental protection and non-environmental costs. In some economic entities or national economies there is a lack of legal regulation and inadequate environmental protection. Therefore every day there are new opportunities that open the door for new approaches, but all for the ultimate goal of achieving the ultimate goal of sustainable development. Using a sustainable development strategy by applying environmental accounting to companies contributes to public reputation in the economic market, while preventing the emergence of ecological disasters that may have a major financial impact on the business of the enterprise. The sustainable development strategy and environmental accounting are not sufficiently implemented in Croatian companies. This research has established that 23.46% of the companies surveyed have implemented environmental accounting in a satisfactory manner. Is this the reason for not being able to adjust to ecological and social requirements, the difficulty of tracking materials and raw materials and their impact on business enterprises or ultimately not having strictly defined legal regulations. Most companies do not systematically have implanted environmental accounting, while the research has provided data that there is a correlation between the implementation of environmental accounting with the achievement of enterprise profits and the creation of economic added value (Profit 0.347 and EVA 0.574). The consistency of all economic system participants in the implementation of a sustainable development strategy is necessary, while environmental accounting is only frustrating with the implementation tools. In the near future, greater and wider application of environmental accounting is expected, primarily due to the achievement of significant ecological performance that contributes to increased profits and the creation of value added companies.

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RAČUNOVODSTVO OKOLIŠA KAO STRATEGIJA ODRŽIVOG RAZVOJA U HRVATSKIM PREDUZEĆIMA

SAŽETAK

Održivost je postao termin koji se primjenjuje u svim aspektima života. Ekologija i održivost su danas prisutni u svim aspektima života, pa tako i u računovodstvu suvremenih poslovnih organizacija. Napredak društva i industrije dovodi do ozbiljnih problema za očuvanje prirodnog staništa i ekoloških uvjeta života. Stoga se postavlja pitanje što mogu učiniti poduzeća, menadžment i regulatorna tijela za očuvanje okoliša u sadašnjosti, ali i u budućnosti. Ključna uloga u takvom načinu praćenja okoliša imaju sustavi mjerenja i evidentiranja štetnih utjecaja na okoliš. Jedan od takvih sustava mjerenja i evidentiranja zaštite okoliša, indeksiranje, organiziranje i upravljanje podacima, isporuku informacija o okolišu putem fizičkih i monetarnih pokazatelja je sustav računovodstva okoliša. Računovodstvo okoliša predstavlja neophodan alat za primjenu koncepta održivog razvoja te se nalaže kao sredstvo za mjerenje očuvanja okoliša i/ili mjerenje štetnog utjecaja na okoliš za povećanja performansi poduzeća. Odnosno, potrebno je u službenim izvještajima gospodarskih subjekata uključiti podatke o okolišu i društveno odgovornom poslovanju, kao i implementaciju takvih podataka u poslovne planove. Ovim radom želi se istražiti u kojoj mjeri se računovodstvo zaštite okoliša provodi u hrvatskim poduzećima i koliko računovodstvo okoliša pridonosi stvaranju dodane vrijednosti poduzeća i ostvarivanju profita.

Ključne riječi: *Zaštita okoliša, računovodstvo okoliša, strategija održivog razvoja*

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