



ALASKAN ECO-ENTREPRENEURS: THE ROLE OF KNOWLEDGE, TECHNOLOGY, AND INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS

Rick Wolk

University of Alaska Southeast, USA

Email: Rick.Wolk@uas.alaska.edu

ABSTRACT

John Park identified the entrepreneur, technology, and knowledge/ experience of the firm as three components of the opportunity recognition process when he looked at innovation at the interface of these three elements in his article "Opportunity recognition and product innovation in hi-tech start-ups" (Park, *Technovation*, 2005.) I am looking at a model that adds the additional role of social entrepreneur to the three components that Park identified. From this four-pronged model, I then look at innovation in the area of eco-entrepreneurs.

The Skoll Foundation defines social entrepreneurs as "society's change agent, pioneer of innovations that benefit humanity." (<http://www.skollfoundation.org/>). How do Alaskan entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs work together to innovate and to take advantage of opportunities related to risk: regulatory, supply chain, product & technology risk, litigation risk, reputation risk, and physical risk (Lash & Wellington, "Competitive Advantage on a Warming Planet", *Harvard Business Review*, March 2007) if we use Park's definition of innovation: "Innovation is really the practical application of new or emerging knowledge for profit." How well do these Alaskan entrepreneurs form and take advantage of knowledge and technology developments? How well do they form and utilize international networks?

Presentation will include Alaskan case studies.