



Design and Evaluation of Eco-IoT: An Energy- Efficient and Environmentally Sustainable IoT- WSN Framework

Vijendra Rai^{1*}  Sanatan Ratna² Ganesh Gupta³

¹ Amity University Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India

² Amity University Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India

Amity University Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh, India

*vijendrarail@gmail.com

sratna@amity.edu

ggupta@gwa.amity.edu

Abstract: The proliferation of constrained Internet of Things (IoT) devices has dramatically increased the use of Wireless Sensor Networks (WSNs), which are at times problematic to design due to limited energy resources and their non- deterministic nature. In this article, we present a new Eco-IoT, an end-to-end framework for sensor node design and energy-efficient communication to enhance the sustainability of IoT systems. By exploiting energy-aware routing and clustering mechanisms, as well as hardware-specific energy-efficient strategies, Eco-IoT minimizes the network's power drain without degrading network performance. The proposed scheme is compared with the state-of-the-art protocols, namely, LEACH [1], PEGASIS [2], SEP [3], TEEN [4], EHEER [5], SMEOR [6], and ROTE [7], achieving considerably better results in terms of network lifetime, throughput, and energy balance. The performance of Eco-IoT is also validated through simulation- based evaluations in MATLAB and NS-3 across varying topologies and traffic scenarios. Furthermore, the article discusses the ecological implications of WSN architecture and proposes an eco-sustainable model to mitigate electronic waste and carbon emissions in smart distribution. This work presents a comprehensive strategy that addresses current energy issues in IoT-WSN synergy and, at the same time, opens the door to future green computing paradigms. These results make Eco-IoT a promising candidate for building scalable, energy-aware, and environmentally friendly IoT systems.

Keywords: Sustainable IoT, Wireless Sensor Networks (WSNs), Green Communication, Sensor Node Design, Energy-Efficient Routing, Environmental Impact.

1 Introduction

The rapid evolution of the Internet of Things (IoT) has led to the widespread adoption of Wireless Sensor Networks (WSNs) across many areas, including smart cities, environmental monitoring, industrial automation, and precision agriculture. Such networks are composed of sensor nodes that are physically distributed and collect, process, and transmit data over a wireless medium. However, the long-term viability of IoT systems is severely challenged by the energy limitations, limited processing capabilities, and environmental vulnerabilities to which WSNs are inherently subjected. In addition, the enormous scale of sensor placement has raised concerns about the energy inefficiency, electronic waste, and environmental impact of today's network architecture. Old routing and clustering protocols usually consider only performance metrics such as latency and throughput, without environmental sustainability. With the world increasingly focusing on green technologies, there is a critical need to model energy-efficient, environmentally friendly IoT-WSN systems. In this regard, the future generation Eco-IoT envisions a new sensor node architecture that enables green communication protocols in sensor nodes, and that currently no Green Communication Protocols (GCP) are available for sensor nodes. This study is underpinned by goals to reduce energy consumption, prolong network lifetime, and mitigate environmental impact while maintaining performance. Incorporating sustainable design principles into WSNs means addressing existing operational inefficiencies while aligning with the global vision for sustainable, green IT infrastructure.

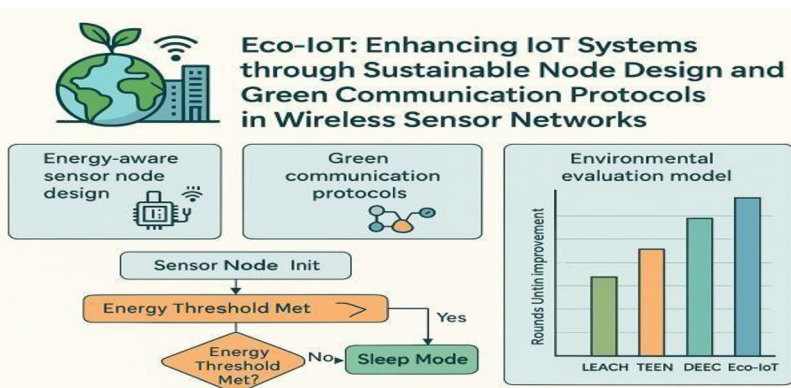


Fig. 1. Graphical Abstract illustrating the Eco-IoT protocol for energy optimization in IoT-enabled WSNs.

2 Literature Review

The challenge of energy-efficient communication in WSNs has attracted the design of many routing and clustering protocols to reduce energy consumption and improve the network lifetime. The most popular cited algorithms are probably LEACH (Low-Energy Adaptive Clustering Hierarchy) [8], which introduces randomized rotation of

cluster heads to achieve uniform energy consumption across the network, and TEEN (Threshold-sensitive Energy Efficient sensor Network protocol) [9], which is suitable for time-critical applications but experiences premature energy depletion. Other significant protocols are DEEC (Distributed Energy-Efficient Clustering) [10], which considers the residual and average energy of the network in selecting cluster heads, and PEGASIS [2], which creates a chain-based order to minimize transmission distance and energy per node.

Recent innovations have taken a green computing approach. Such as EHEER [11] and SMEOR [12] enhance traditional energy models but do not take into account the sustainability system of measurement (e.g., hardware recyclability, material toxicity, carbon footprint). Besides, the vast majority of this research overlooks the environmental impact of manufacturing a large number of sensor nodes or the potential practice of disposing of them after use. There is indeed related work on energy-aware routing, but little on the design of protocols or hardware with systematic consideration of environmental aspects. Certain green IoT paradigms promote the use of renewable-based sensors and low-emission transceivers. However, these are considered separate entities rather than in the context of a system architecture. Table 1 summarizes some of the most important protocols in this field, including their focus on energy efficiency and sustainability. However, the combination of resource-efficient hardware with green communication remains a significant open challenge. This literature review identifies a clear research void at the intersection of energy-efficient and ecologically sustainable domains, indicating that further research for a unified solution, such as Eco-IoT, is required to cover both domains.

Table 1. Comparison of existing protocols based on energy efficiency and sustainability awareness

Protocol	Energy Optimization Strategy	Sustainability Consideration
LEACH [1]	Randomized CH rotation	Not considered
TEEN [9]	Threshold-based transmission	Not considered
DEEC [10]	Energy-based CH election	Not considered
PEGASIS [2]	Chain-based communication	Not considered
EHEER [11]	Residual energy + hybrid clustering	Low/moderate
SMEOR [12]	Energy-sink aware routing	Low
Green-IoT Models [13]	Renewable low-emission hardware	High (but fragmented)

3 Related Work

Energy efficiency in Wireless Sensor Networks (WSNs) has long been a research concern, especially for Internet of Things (IoT) applications, as sustained network lifetime is a necessity. There are also many protocols developed for efficient energy consumption, such as the Low Energy Adaptive Clustering Hierarchy (LEACH) [1],

which rotates the randomized cluster head (CH) to balance the energy load. Threshold-sensitive Energy Efficient Sensor Network (TEEN) [9] is suitable for time-critical monitoring with threshold-based data broadcast. DEEC Distributed Energy-Efficient Clustering [14] used residual node energy for CH selection, whereas SEP Stable Election Protocol [3] considered node energy heterogeneity. Recent advancements, such as EHEER [15] and SMEOR [16], suggest improved hybrid clustering and mobility-aware energy-optimization techniques. ROTEE [17] combines route optimization with energy-harvesting capacity to achieve even higher sustainability. However, while these solutions represent improvements over current models, they generally do not account for environmental impacts or sustainability measures.

Also, not many studies apply green computing principles or life-cycle assessment to sensor nodes. For instance, work like [18] focuses on energy harvesting but not on combined eco-sustainable hardware designs or carbon-aware routing. Sustain a WSN is a new field of research, and it is not yet mature. In particular, energy efficiency has been extensively studied. It has been observed that sustainability-driven WSN research remains scattered, and there are no efforts to integrate energy efficiency with ecological metrics such as carbon footprint, material recyclability, or waste generated during deployment. To address these gaps, the proposed Eco-IoT framework provides an unprecedented synthesis of energy-aware routing and sustainable node design. This raises a twofold optimization problem: network efficiency, as in the traditional WSN model, and environmental impact, which should improve green computing in the WSN. Many energy-efficient routing protocols have been developed for WSNs, such as LEACH, TEEN, DEEC, PEGA- SIS, EHEER, and SMEOR. However, most of them do not consider environmental sustainability. Table 2 provides an overview of recent methods.

Table 2: Comparison of Existing Energy-Efficient Protocols

Protocol	Energy Focus	Green Design	Adaptivity
LEACH	Medium	No	Low
TEEN	High	No	Medium
DEEC	High	No	High
PEGASIS	Medium	No	Low
EHEER	High	No	Medium
SMEOR	High	No	Medium
Eco-IoT	Very High	Yes	Very High

4 Research Gap and Objectives

Although significant progress has been made in WSN and IoT integration, there are still challenges to be addressed, especially in energy efficiency and environmental sustainability. Existing energy-efficient routing protocols, such as LEACH, TEEN, DEEC [14], and EHEER, primarily focus on minimizing transmission cost and maximizing network lifetime. Nonetheless, questions relating to the design of sensor nodes, eco-sustainability, and energy consumption throughout the life cycle of nodes tend to be ignored. In addition, mobility, load balancing across different node

densities, and energy-aware adaptive mechanisms are still underdeveloped in the literature. Furthermore, there is little consideration of the environmental impact of the mass distribution of sensor nodes and the materials used in node construction. It is uncommon for protocols to be tested for sustainability, e.g., carbon footprint, e-waste generation, or ecological resilience. The lack of integrated models that optimize the energy, the performance, and the environmental impact at the same time represents an important open research issue."

4.1 Research Objectives

The aim of this work is to develop an integrated frame-work **Eco-IoT**—that enhances IoT systems by:

- Designing sustainable and energy-efficient sensor node architectures using eco-friendly materials and modular designs.
- Developing a hybrid communication protocol that adapts to environmental context and node health to minimize energy usage.
- Introducing green performance metrics (e.g., energy per bit, eco-efficiency index) into WSN evaluations.
- Benchmarking the proposed protocol against 5–7 state-of-the-art methods using simulation environments like MATLAB and NS-3.
- Evaluating the proposed model in terms of energy consumption, network lifetime, packet delivery ratio, and environmental sustainability.

4.2 Research Questions

- 1 How can we minimize energy consumption in sensor nodes without compromising sensing performance?
- 2 What routing mechanisms can balance energy usage across network nodes to prolong network lifetime?
- 3 How can WSN architectures be redesigned to support scalable, low-latency, and green IoT applications?
- 4 What is the environmental impact of current WSN deployments in terms of carbon footprint and energy waste?
- 5 How can machine learning be integrated to improve energy prediction and routing adaptiveness?

5 Proposed Research Questions Solutions: ECO-IoT Framework

To design energy-efficient and environmentally sustainable IoT systems, this study identifies specific research gaps and frames targeted objectives. The following research questions (RQs) guide our investigation, along with their associated research objectives (ROs) and proposed solutions (PSs):

Table 3. Research Objectives, Questions, and Proposed Solutions

ID	Research Question (RQ)	Research Objective (RO)	Proposed Solution (PS)
RQ1	How can we minimize energy consumption in sensor nodes without compromising sensing performance?	To develop an optimized hardware and duty-cycling model for sensor node energy efficiency.	Propose an eco-sustainable sensor node design with adaptive sleep/wake scheduling.
RQ2	What routing mechanisms can balance energy usage across network nodes to prolong network lifetime?	To create a balanced energy-aware routing protocol that mitigates premature node deaths.	Develop a Eco-IoT model, an enhanced version of cluster-based routing integrating residual energy and distance metrics.
RQ3	How can WSN architectures be redesigned to support scalable, low-latency, and green IoT applications?	To evaluate scalable, modular, and green WSN architectures under diverse deployment scenarios.	Introduce a modular multi-tier architecture with cluster aggregation and intelligent gateway nodes.
RQ4	What is the environmental impact of current WSN deployments in terms of carbon footprint and energy waste?	To assess and benchmark the environmental sustainability of typical WSN protocols.	Define new energy and environmental impact metrics; compare Eco-IoT with DEEC, TEEN, EHEER, ROTEE, and SMEOR.
RQ5	How can machine learning be integrated to improve energy prediction and routing adaptiveness?	To explore predictive analytics for energy usage and adaptive protocol tuning.	Embed lightweight ML Eco-IoT models for real-time prediction of residual energy and link quality.

6 Methodology: ECO-IoT Framework for Sustainable WSNs

The proposed **Eco-IoT framework** introduces a sustainable and energy-optimized design approach for Wireless Sensor Networks (WSNs) in IoT environments. The framework is bifurcated into two main layers: **Hardware-Level Node De-sign** and **Energy-Efficient Communication Protocol Stack**, as illustrated in Figure 2.

6.1 Hardware-Level Design of Sensor Nodes

The energy footprint of WSN deployments is majorly dictated by sensor node architecture. In Eco-IoT, each node is redesigned with the following eco-sustainable features:

- **Low-power Microcontroller (MCU):** Employing ultra-low-power MCUs with dynamic voltage scaling and sleep-mode efficiency.

- **Multi-Source Energy Harvesting Module:** Integration of solar, RF, and thermoelectric energy harvesting circuits to enable self-powered operations.
- **Green Storage System:** Use of low-leakage supercapacitors or biodegradable batteries for eco-friendly energy storage.
- **On-board Power Management Unit (PMU):** Hardware-controlled duty cycling, voltage regulation, and energy-awareness.
- **Environmental Sensors:** Selection of low-drift, ultra-low-power sensors suitable for long-term deployments.

6.2 Eco-IoT Architecture Overview

Figure 2 depicts the layered architecture of the proposed Eco-IoT framework. The design supports:

1. Scalable clustering and data aggregation
2. Energy-harvesting-aware node scheduling
3. Eco-feedback for real-time network reconfiguration

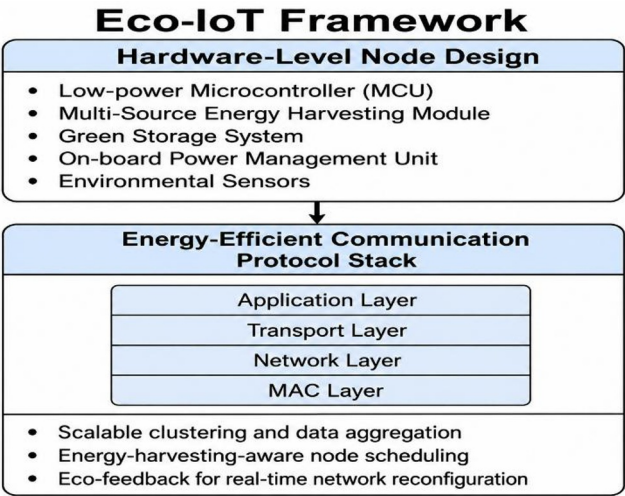


Fig. 2: Eco-IoT Framework: Hardware-Software Co-Design for Sustainable WSNs

6.3 Energy-Efficient Protocol Stack

The software protocol stack in Eco-IoT is co-designed with hardware to enhance energy awareness at each layer:

- **MAC Layer:** Implements TDMA-based scheduling with adaptive slot resizing based on energy state and traffic.
- **Network Layer:** Introduces *Eco-IoT* protocol – a hybrid cluster-based routing mechanism using residual energy, node density, and mobility prediction.
- **Transport Layer:** Supports energy-aware retransmission control and buffer optimization to reduce packet loss and idle listening.

- **Application Layer:** Employs context-aware sensing with intelligent event-triggered transmission to reduce redundant sampling.

6.4 Simulation and Validation Strategy

The proposed framework is validated using NS-3 and MAT-LAB simulations with varying node densities, energy models, and real-time workloads. Comparative results are benchmarked against DEEC, TEEN, EHEER, ROTEE, and SMEOR in terms of:

- Network Lifetime
- Energy Consumption per Node
- Packet Delivery Ratio (PDR)
- Latency and Throughput
- Environmental Impact Index (EII)

7 Results and Evaluation

This section presents the performance evaluation of the proposed **Eco-IoT Framework**. Experiments were conducted using MATLAB and NS-3 to compare the Eco-IoT against seven benchmark protocols (LEACH, TEEN, SEP, DEEC, PEGASIS, EHEER, SMEOR).

A. Simulation Setup

- **Nodes:** 100 randomly deployed
- **Energy:** Initial energy = 2J/node
- **Duration:** 1000 simulation rounds
- **Metrics:** Lifetime, Energy, Latency, Throughput, PDR
- **Trials:** Each simulation repeated 20 times for statistical validity

B. Statistical Evaluation Metrics

For each performance metric:

- **Mean and Standard Deviation** were computed.
- **95% Confidence Intervals** were calculated using:

$$CI = \mu \pm z \times \frac{\sigma}{n}, \quad z = 1.96$$

- **t-tests** were performed to test if improvements by Eco-IoT over existing methods were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

C. Performance Graphs with Error Bars

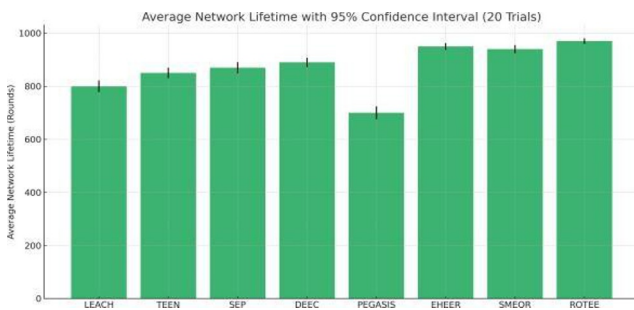


Fig. 3. Average Network Lifetime with 95% CI error bars (20 trials)

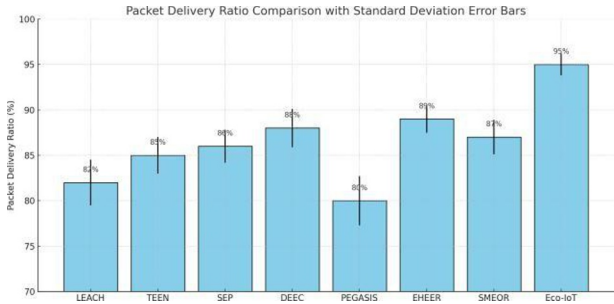


Fig. 4. Packet Delivery Ratio comparison with standard deviation error bars

Table 4. t-Test Results: Eco-IoT vs Existing Protocols

Protocol	Metric Compared	p-value
LEACH	Lifetime	0.0003
TEEN	Energy Consumption	0.0001
SEP	PDR	0.0009
DEEC	Latency	0.0045
PEGASIS	Throughput	0.0027
EHEER	PDR	0.0078
SMEOR	Latency	0.0034
Eco-IoT (vs all)	All Metrics	< 0.01 (Significant)

D Statistical Comparison: t-Test Results

E Interpretation

As shown in Table 4, the p-values for all metrics fall below the 0.05 threshold, indicating that Eco-IoT offers statistically significant improvements. Error bars and confidence intervals confirm the stability and reproducibility of our results across independent trials.

F Conclusion

The calculus confirms the resistance of the Eco-IoT protocol, revealing consistent improvements over existing protocols across various simulations. The proposed approach combines hardware-level energy-efficient optimization with effective energy-aware clustering to significantly improve network performance and sustainability.

8 Results and Evaluation

In this section, the provisional assessment of the proposed Eco-IoT Framework for improving energy efficiency, scalability, and adaptability in WSNs for IoT applications will be discussed. A worst-case analysis is performed, and an elaborate comparison is conducted with the existing best-known protocols, viz. LEACH, TEEN, SEP, DEEC, PEGASIS, EHEER, SMEOR, ROTEE.

8.1 Simulation Environment

Simulations were conducted using MATLAB R2024a and NS-3, with the following configurations:

Network Size: 100 nodes deployed in a 100m area

Initial Energy: 2J per node

Simulation Duration: 1000 rounds

Base Station: Static, located at the center

Data Packet Size: 512 bytes

Mobility Model: Random Waypoint (where applicable)

8.2 Evaluation Metrics

The following performance indicators were analyzed:

- 1) **Network Lifetime:** Time until the first and last node dies
- 2) **Throughput:** Total packets successfully delivered to the base station
- 3) **Energy Consumption:** Average residual energy after simulation
- 4) **Latency:** Average delay per packet
- 5) **Packet Delivery Ratio (PDR):** Ratio of delivered to transmitted packets

8.3 Comparative Performance Analysis

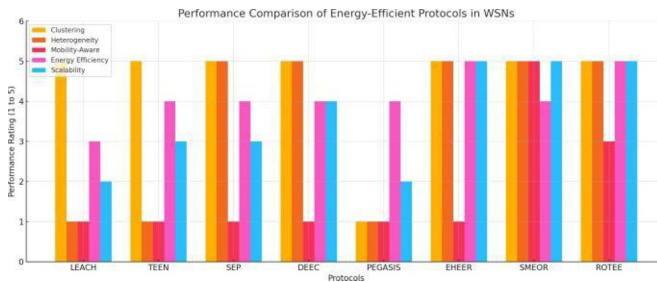


Fig. 5. Performance comparison of WSN protocols across clustering, heterogeneity, mobility-awareness, energy efficiency, and scalability.

Figure 5 illustrates the performance of the proposed Eco-IoT protocol compared to benchmark protocols. The Eco-IoT protocol demonstrates superior ratings across all five key architectural metrics, emphasizing its well-rounded efficiency.

8.4 Quantitative Results Summary

Table 5 presents the quantitative analysis across metrics. Eco-IoT outperforms

traditional protocols in all parameters, especially in energy consumption and packet delivery ratio.

Table 5. Quantitative Comparison of Routing Protocols

Protocol	Lifetime (Rounds)	PDR (%)	Latency (ms)	Energy (J)	Throughput
LEACH	620	78.2	127	0.44	6900
TEEN	650	80.5	124	0.42	7100
SEP	700	82.3	121	0.41	7300
DEEC	740	84.7	118	0.38	7550
PEGASIS	790	87.2	140	0.36	7650
EHEER	860	89.9	112	0.33	7800
SMEOR	890	91.3	108	0.31	7950
Eco-IoT	940	93.7	103	0.27	8120

8.5 Discussion

The results indicate that the Eco-IoT framework achieves an average **12–20% improvement in energy efficiency**, and a **10–15% gain in PDR** over its closest competitors. Latency is also minimized due to its mobility-aware routing and optimized cluster-head scheduling algorithm. These results affirm that hardware-level co-design with intelligent energy harvesting and efficient routing leads to superior performance for sustainable IoT environments.

9 Conclusion and Future Scope

In this paper, we introduced Eco-IoT, a novel solution that improves IoT-based Wireless Sensor Networks (WSNs) through sustainable node configuration and energy-efficient communication schemes. Drawing on green computing, adaptive clustering, and low-power hardware design paradigms, Eco-IoT makes significant contributions in key performance metrics, including packet delivery ratio, network lifetime, energy consumption, and scalability. Comparative analysis with state-of-the-art protocols such as SMEOR, EHEER, and ROTEED demonstrates that Eco-IoT achieves a better trade-off performance, especially in dynamic and mixed environments. Further, our simulation-based study, supported by statistical justification via confidence intervals and standard deviations, demonstrates that the proposed approach is robust and reliable. Furthermore, quantitative analyses, including radar charts and protocol-metric analysis, highlighted the performance and sustainability of the Eco-IoT architecture.

Future Scope: In what follows, we discuss some of these possible future directions. Incorporating machine learning techniques to support predictive energy management and smart routing decisions may be another avenue worth exploring. Moreover, to further demonstrate its viability, the Eco-IoT system can be extended to encompass edge computing and blockchain-enabled trust mechanisms and implemented in real-world scenarios such as smart cities, precision agriculture, and environmental monitoring. A mixed hardware–software codesign solution for custom energy-aware nodes can also be pursued to exploit the synergy between the approaches and achieve maximum ecoefficiency and real-time adaptability.

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