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An efficient agro-industrial complex in Almería (Spain): Towards an integrated and sustainable bioeconomy model

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Highlights

A novel bioeconomy model in Almería, South East Spain

Production in Almería agrees with bioeconomy aims, sustainability and circular economy

Sustainable and efficient production system valorising waste agriculture biomass

Abstract

In the last ten years, bioeconomy strategies and policy-related bioeconomy initiatives have been developed all over the world. Some of them are currently in the process of translation into specific actions. In most cases, the approaches followed have been top-down policy-related initiatives, triggered by the public sector originating a dynamic which can bring together different bioeconomy stakeholders i.e. industry, academia, financial operators and farmers.

This article describes a bottom-up situation with unique bioeconomy-related features that deserve specific attention. Over the last 40 years, Almería, in the south east of Spain, has developed one of the most efficient agro-industrial complexes in the world, evolving from a traditional and subsistence agriculture, to becoming the major vegetable exporter in the European Union (EU). This growth set aside issues such as sustainability, long-term perspectives on water resources or agricultural waste. However, societal concerns about a

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