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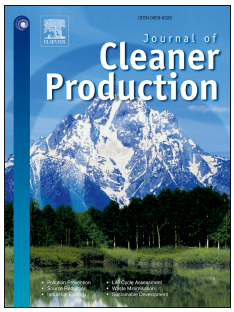

Knowledge sharing and scientific cooperation in the design of research-based policies: The case of the circular economy

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Knowledge sharing and scientific cooperation in the design of research-based policies: the case of the circular economy

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Abstract

Building on the idea that the more general and systemic the policy objectives, the more cooperation and scientific support is needed for sound policy design, this paper explores the potential for knowledge sharing and research-based cooperation in the policymaking process in the field of circular economy. A sample of 1,244 research publications on circular economy from the Scopus database was collected to assess: i) how the research on CE is distributed among the main disciplines of scientific research, and how much attention each of them pays to the subject; ii) what potential they exhibit for interdisciplinary communication and knowledge sharing; and iii) the potential for developing a transdisciplinary cooperation under a common conceptual policy framework. The analysis shows that policies for circular economy at the micro/meso level (firm or inter-firm initiatives) can rely on a much more adequate knowledge base and potential scientific support than those at the macro level (circular economy as a model of systemic sustainable development). To improve the results on the macro side, a number of disciplines (including social sciences, economics and some behavioural sciences) should be solicited to devote more space to the study of the subject and to develop the basis for mutual understanding with other traditionally more involved research areas.

Keywords: circular economy; knowledge sharing; research-based policy; multi-inter-trans-disciplinarity; cluster analysis; network analysis

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