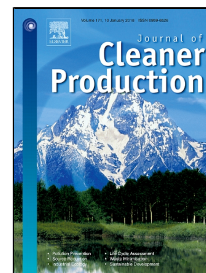


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Green Public Procurement, Missing Concepts and Future Trends – A Critical Review



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# Green Public Procurement

## Missing Concepts and Future Trends – A Critical Review

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**ABSTRACT:** *Green Public Procurement (GPP) is an increasingly debated “demand side” environmental policy instrument. The aim of this paper is to take stock of the related literature, with the twofold aim of developing a conceptual model of the relevant phases of GPP and to identify the related research gaps in detail. The literature analyzed here comprises English language papers, which are focused on GPP during the time period from 2000 to 2016. By means of a systematic literature review and content analysis, we provide both a quantitative and qualitative viewpoint. As our analysis reveals, GPP discussion has mostly focused so far on the specific impacts of GPP implementation, while the discussion on GPP as compared to other environmental policy tools, in terms of efficiency and innovation, is still lagging behind; this is coupled with a limited geographical coverage. Finally, by disaggregating the 17 years period under scrutiny into four sub-periods allows us to outline the changes in research trends over time.*

**Keywords:** *Green public procurement (GPP), Literature review, Content analysis, Environmental policy, Leximancer.*

## 1. Introduction

Public Procurement power may be an important driver towards environmentally friendly procurement. Indeed, the public sector can influence green procurement both by designing suitable policies and by leveraging “green” markets through the significant dimension of public purchases. As a result, we can expect Green Public Procurement (GPP) to potentially play a role in changing unsustainable consumption and production patterns, and indeed it is an increasingly used tool, although at different paces in different countries/regions. For example, in the EU, the public procurement volume has been estimated to be worth 16% of GDP (European Commission, 2017).

The basic concept of GPP relies on integrating environmental criteria for public products and services procurement (Evans *et al.*, 2010). GPP is defined in the European Commission’s Communication as “a process whereby public authorities seek to procure goods, services and works with a reduced environmental impact throughout their life cycle when compared to goods, services and works with the same primary function that would otherwise be procured.” (COM (2008) 400, p. 4). Similar definitions can be found in relation to OECD and APEC countries (Gimenez-Pujol & Castano, 2013; Bouwer *et al.*, 2006; Li & Geiser, 2005). Although the terms used by countries are different, the central idea existing emphasized in definitions is that of a demand-oriented policy tool to

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