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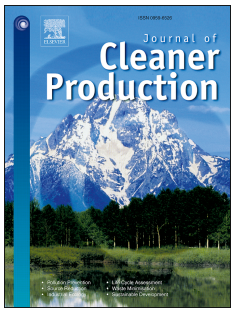

Supply chain integration in the UK bioenergy industry: Findings from a pilot study

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Abstract

Interest in bioenergy as a viable alternative to fossil fuels is increasing. This emergent sector is subject to a range of ambitious initiatives promoted by National Governments to generate energy from renewable sources. Transition to energy production from biomass still lacks a feasible infrastructure particularly from a supply chain and business perspective. Supply chain integration has not been studied widely providing a deficit in the literature and in practice. This paper presents results from a pilot study designed to identify attributes that helps optimise such supply chains. To consider this challenge it is important to identify those characteristics that integrate bioenergy supply chains and ascertain if they are distinct from those found in conventional energy models. In general terms the supply chain is defined by upstream at the point of origin of raw materials and downstream at the point of distribution to final customer. It remains to be seen if this is the case for bioenergy supply chains as there is an imbalance between knowledge and practice, even understanding the terminology. The initial pilot study results presented in the paper facilitates understanding the gap between general supply chain knowledge and what is practiced within bioenergy organisations.