Sustainable Business Model Innovation for the Agroindustry

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Abstract: Research about business models, business model innovation and sustainability in business model innovation in the agroindustry in general has received little attention. Nevertheless, in other sectors, models like cradle-to-cradle and product stewardship have proven to be successful for ensuring the economic and environmental sustainability of industries. This paper aims to fill this gap by addressing the following research question: what value can cradle-to-cradle and product stewardship create to integrated biomass logistics centers? For this, a systematic literature review based on the archetype on sustainable business models “create value from waste” provided by Bocken et al. (2014) was carried out. After the analysis process a total of 14 papers were selected and the “value proposition”, “value creation and delivery” and “value capture” in each business model was identified. The extracted knowledge from the analysis was used as a basis for the definition of a business model innovation in the agroindustry.

Keywords: Business Model Innovation; Agroindustry; Cradle-to-cradle; Product stewardship; Systematic literature review.

1 Introduction

Nowadays, agro-industries are facing several barriers that difficult their competitiveness. Some of them include the seasonal nature, which imply low activity, and underuse of the existing resources, such as residues arising from the exploitation of the business activity. Agro industries are usually located in rural areas with scarcity of opportunities in terms of business activity in other industry sectors. This implies a problem for the consolidation of these areas in terms of population growth and employment. Given these challenges, existing business models have proved to be difficult to apply.

Increasing concerns about the depletion of natural resources have boosted the commitment of governments and firms towards a sustainable development. Sustainability in a business context is generally linked to the Triple-Bottom-Line, i.e. three pillars: