



Local entrepreneurs' involvement in strategy building for waste valorisation within an agro-food technological district: a SWOT-SOR approach

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Abstract:

The contribution focuses on agro-food waste valorization conceived as a long-term, complex socio-technical process involving several different actors belonging to multiple levels. Although this process is typically affected by a series of uncertainties, the convergence of stakeholders' expectations proves to be a mean to overcome barriers as it acts as the foundation of a shared agenda setting which formalizes the coordination efforts among the actors involved in an innovation process. Applying the strategic niche management (SNM) framework to the case of the Apulia Agro-Food Technology District (DARE), whose mission is to promote a bio-based industry for food-waste valorization, the paper proposes an operational tool capable of designing the strategy based on the entrepreneurs' knowledge. The DARE aims to promote the technological innovation of agro-food firms located in the South of Italy. The results of a SWOT-SOR analysis led to the establishment of a twofold strategy aimed at (a) promoting the innovation of more active and dynamic firms and (a) reducing the gap between "pioneer" and "laggard" firms, with the result of promoting integrated innovation throughout the entire district.

Biography:

Maurizio Prospero is assistant professor at the University of Foggia (Italy). He holds Msc and PhD in Agricultural Economics, issued at Kyoto University (Japan). He has been involved in research activities related to the valori-



sation of agricultural biomass for energy and biomaterials production. In particular, he has been involved in several international European Projects, such as Sustoil (FP7-ENERGY-2007-1-RTD), STAR-AgroEnergy (FP7-REG-POT-2011-1), and EUBis (COST action TD1203). The focus of his research is on new business formation related to the valorization of renewable resources, in rural areas.

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3. Lopolito, A.; Nardone, G.; Prospero, M.; Sisto, R.; Stasi, A. Modeling the Bio-refinery Industry in Rural Areas: A Participatory Approach for Policy Options Comparison. *Ecol. Econ.* 2011, 72, 18–27.

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