Abstract

Voluntary Environmental Initiatives in the Canadian Manufacturing Sector

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The traditional regulatory approach to controlling pollution is inadequate in supporting sustainability, drawing attention to alternative strategies including self-regulation. However, such efforts rely on voluntary action on behalf of industry. Little research has been conducted to assess the effectiveness of these initiatives in the Canadian context.

Utilizing a combination of telephone and written questionnaires, Canadian manufacturing associations were surveyed to determine the extent to which voluntary environmental initiatives were promoted to their members.

The results indicate that only a small percentage of manufacturing associations promote formal voluntary environmental initiatives, suggesting that this form of self-regulation is not widely accepted by industry. These initiatives placed significant emphasis on legislative compliance and the goal and were deficient in key transparency and credibility indicators, suggesting that reliance on self-regulation alone is inadequate to address sustainable environmental management.