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Innovative Approaches in Environmental Engineering: Advanced Pollution Control Techniques and Sustainable Solutions

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Annotation: The rapid industrialization and population growth have intensified environmental pollution, creating challenges in air, water, and soil quality management. Despite advancements in pollution control, there remains a gap in integrating sustainable and innovative solutions for effective environmental remediation. This study reviews advanced pollution control techniques, including bioelectrochemical systems, bioremediation, and nanotechnology-based approaches, to address contemporary environmental issues. Findings indicate that these emerging technologies offer improved pollutant removal efficiency, energy recovery potential, and reduced environmental impact. The results underscore the importance of integrating green technologies and sustainable engineering solutions to mitigate pollution and promote a cleaner, healthier environment. Future research should focus on optimizing these technologies for large-scale applications to achieve long-term sustainability.

Keywords: Environmental engineering, pollution control, bioremediation, bio electrochemical systems, nanotechnology, sustainable solutions.

1. Introduction to Environmental Engineering

Environmental engineering is an exciting, growing field that focuses on the protection and management of the environment. Environmental engineers deal with complex combinations of environmental systems and environment-people interfaces, which require them to have interdisciplinary knowledge. As these interactions create a change in the environment, the concern of the human mind has been drawn to a more recent study field, environmental engineering. Engineers have the role of planning, designing, constructing and managing waste treatment facilities, promoting industries with required treatment facilities, choosing raw materials and fuels with fewer pollutants and employing innovative technologies for the prevention of environmental pollution [1]. The importance of integrated use of cleaner production technologies with end of pipe pollution technologies is discussed. If the applications of cleaner production are not integrated to low-cost end-of-pipe pollution control techniques, the industries may face production constraints, particularly in developing countries like India. Implementation of cleaner production may pose a threat to the industrial development in terms of decreased productivity and profitability. Therefore, analyzer technique has been used to evaluate the possibility of the simultaneous application of cleaner production and low-cost end-of-pipe pollution control technologies. Optimization of integrated environmental pollution control systems is proposed to discover the minimum total annualized cost investment and improves cost-effectiveness. Use of the methodology and the analyzer in an application for the primary copper production in the Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex in Iran are discussed [2].

1.1. Overview of Environmental Challenges

The immense benefits of industrialization and urbanization have created diverse opportunities in urban and rural areas. These opportunities, however, have brought impasses for contemporary civilization because the development surpassed its limitation and autostarted to change the natural environment. Depletion of natural resources, increased urbanization, and industrial activities leading to environmental degradation were increased due to the industrial revolution. The degradation of the environment began since the start of the 19th century. This problem remains unchanged in the 21st century with further challenges due to the increase in population and overexploitation of natural resources [3]. The unplanned development of industries and improper planning of urban areas have further complicated the problem. Therefore, the challenge is not only to reverse this condition, but also to adopt an approach that can cope with the adverse consequences.

A comprehensive overview of major environmental challenges is given, primarily focusing on burgeoning problems due to contemporary civilization of the 21st century. The broader issues juxtapose the causes, effects, and possible remedies. The challenges for environmental professionals in the 21st century may be profound as the adverse problems of the environment are mounting with an increasing population and over-exploitation of natural resources. Disruption of the environment may pose a threat, not only to the earth's natural environment, but also to human health [4]. Therefore, an integrated approach is needed to alleviate the multiple problems and developing a system that can cope with adverse consequences. Many opportunities during the industrial revolution increased the standard of living. However, the depletion of natural resources and an exponential increase of the population in industrial areas have further complicated the challenges to maintain the environment. Moreover, the urbanization of the world has brought another challenge, particularly for health. In light of this, environmental engineers will face challenges not only to reverse this condition but also to adopt an approach that can cope with adverse consequence to protect better existing and future generations.

2. Fundamentals of Pollution Control

The main objectives of pollution management are the production or creation of activities, products and services that minimize pollution and that are not harmful to human health and the environment. These objectives are achieved through: (1) Pollution prevention; the elimination of the cause or source of pollution from a process or activity; (2) The control or reduction of pollution from a pollutant source or area. This includes end-of-pipe treatment of pollutants, changes to a system or process to minimize the level of polluting undergoes, such as recycling or reduced consumption; (3) The remediation of polluted land.

The control of pollution from an environmental control perspective typically involves treatment, the use of or exposure of the contaminated area or pollutant to some physical or chemical process. Common terms used in pollution and pollution control include: A pollutant is a substance that contaminates another media or material, making it harmful to human health or unsuitable for human use or for another designated purpose. Any properties of the pollutant will depend on the context; An effluent is treated (or untreated) waste discharged into the atmosphere, water sources, or onto land. Generally, an effluent contains one or more pollutants, although presence of a pollutant may not render the entire effluent harmful or polluting; Emission is an often used term when measuring industrial contamination released into the atmosphere. Industrial emissions can be seen, for example, as the smoke from a power station chimney, the vapour released from a fuming acid, or any other substance released into the air that makes it harmful to human health or the environment. Emissions occur from a point or area source; Historical development. Exploitation of natural recourses and large-scale production often goes hand in hand with extensive pollution. In response, regulatory and monitoring systems had to be developed [5].

2.1. Sources and Types of Pollution

Pollution has been around as long as people have inhabited the Earth. Pollution is a problem, or more accurately, a wide variety of problems; the waste products of human activity are numerous. Just about anything people do, make, or use, when thrown away has the potential to pollute the environment. This trash, garbage, or waste, it is usually called refuse when it is difficult to handle, and almost always is accompanied by gasses, liquids, and various other substances that also pollute. Once released into the atmosphere or dumped into a natural body of water, an item of refuse will be transported elsewhere on the planet. And there is of course, no single kind of trash. Some refuse is non-degradable and will accumulate in the environment, often blocking natural processes, or just looking bad [5].

Categorization of pollution into four main types help organize the large array of pollution issues into more classifiable groups. These four essentially arbitrary main types are air, water, soil (an all-inclusive term that also includes its solid counterpart land, and, indirectly, food), and finally, the often overlooked noise pollution [6]. The bases for categorizing pollution into air, water, and soil are of course obvious. But much pollution does not fit so neatly into one of these categories. This classification also implies a strategy for correction. Pollution from industrial sources, transportation, and industry is what is typically meant by pollution control. These various holdings may then be broken down as examples of polluters into air, water, and soil pollutant incidents. The large variety of pollutant problems under this broad classification of air, water, and soil include accidents involving oil, toxic chemicals, acid rain from airborne pollutants, etc. Additionally, other pollution issues, such as noise and radiation, are not easily included within the air, water, soil classification, nevertheless, this triad does include the most salient types of pollution incidents. [7][8][9]

3. Conventional Pollution Control Techniques

For centuries, pollution has been a recognized problem, dating back at least to the industrial revolution and the invention of the steam engine. Conventional methodologies in pollution control have long been a part of the industrial landscape in developed and developing countries alike. These techniques have typically focused on the removal of pollutants after they have been generated or on the prevention of the introduction of pollutants into the environment. These well-established approaches will provide a broad-based foundation on pollution control techniques and subsequently serve as the platform on which newer, more advanced technologies can be evaluated.

The global nature of pollution problems calls for a clear understanding of the methods employed to control pollution. Generally, pollution control techniques can be categorized as being mechanical, chemical, or biological in nature. The knowledge of existing pollution control techniques is required to adequately understand, select, and design new pollution control methodologies. In practice, a mixture of different methods is used to achieve desired water quality in a most economic way [10]. A general scheme of water pollution treatment is proposed in which the advantages and disadvantages of individual techniques are summarized. There are three types of water treatment technologies based on the physical, chemical, and biological process coexist and complement one another to solve various environmental problems. The possible advantage and disadvantage of the process should be noted depending upon the different situations. Thus, the choice of the treatment process can be adapted to the desired objective and the setting. Combined with the abatement process, water treatment can be conducted more efficiently, and the water quality can be enhanced. Generally, a multi-phytotechnology process allows for high flexibility and effectiveness, along with low energy, operational and monitoring costs.

3.1. Physical Methods

Worldwide industrial development has begun to put a heavy burden on the environment both in developing and developed countries, with rising concerns about the consequences in terms of air quality, water availability, ecosystem disturbance, and soil health. The environment provides life, but exposure to toxic substances and deteriorating conditions has resulted in bioaccumulation of persistent, non-biodegradable pollutant concentrations beyond safe levels [11].

In response to such concerns, since the eighteenth century, a series of high-performance pollution control technologies have emerged to combat harmful human impacts on the environment. Pollution control technology can be done using a physical, chemical, or biological process. Physical methods for the control of pollution involve collecting waste through mechanical or gravitational force, using a membrane or adulterated body. In this process, the contaminants of the pollutants are not changed into less toxic materials but are trapped or collected physically [12].

The control of pollution using physical methods can be carried out by filtration, sedimentation, and adsorption, and can also be used in a combination of physical and non-physical processes. On the one hand, physical methods provide efficient screening of contaminated materials from any polluted medium, namely air, water, or soil, by the combination of various techniques. On the other hand, physical methods, from an economic point of view, are extremely lean, especially advocating for their deployment in most places where pollution may be more acute due to heavy traffic, the existence of universities, mining operations, etc. In general, physical methods are used for preliminary treatment as the first line of defense with biological and/or chemical treatment subsequently acting.

4. Advanced Pollution Control Techniques

Environmental engineering is a rapidly evolving field that has embraced several innovative approaches. Advanced pollution control techniques are now more essential than ever as the world faces new and complex environmental challenges. To safeguard environmental health, these advanced pollution control techniques must be explored further to determine the best sustainable solutions. In the forthcoming sections, several innovative yet practical pollution control approaches for graduates to pursue them further in their research and practice will be briefly introduced.

Bioremediation is a cutting-edge and sustainable technique for soil and water treatment. The principles of bioremediation are microbial metabolism for contaminant mineralization and/or transformation, and process optimization, including biostimulation, bioaugmentation, microbial genomics, and bioprocess engineering. Bioremediation has been successfully applied for the treatment of petroleum hydrocarbon-contaminated water and soil. Several prominent cases of phytoremediation implementation in different parts of the world were examined as an effective and cost-efficient way of rehabilitating the environment. In conclusion, biological pollutants' treatment via phytotechnologies is essential for ensuring the ecosystem's sustainability. The energy and material consumed during the application of physical and chemical technologies are substantial. Newly advanced oxidation processes (AOPs) that employ catalytic metal or nonmetal, such as Fe, Cu, Ag, Ce, or C, Ti, Si, and zeolite, overcame the disadvantages related to traditional AOPs. The catalytic AOPs increased the oxidation ability towards recalcitrant pollutants, such as pharmaceutical chemicals, personal care products, pesticides, and heavy metals, at a broad operational pH range. The research and development of novel AOPs for removal of emerging pollutants and their related cost and energy consumption assessment were further addressed [13]. In literature review, the critical parameters influencing the activities of biofiltration are disclosed. Recommendations for the future research scope of biofiltration with the intention of tackling its issues are also presented [12].

4.1. Bioremediation

Since the beginning of industrial revolution in the 19th century, environmental pollution has increased dramatically which affects human health and the ecological environment. In this regard, a variety of advanced pollution control techniques and sustainable solutions have been thought to overcome the emerging issues. In order to achieve this important goal novel and innovative approaches in the fields of environmental engineering have to be developed. For this reason, newly developed advanced alternative repairs and technologies such as Bioremediation, Phytoremediation, Spill Control, Rainwater Use, and Water Treatment Plants, will be discussed among the conventional environmental pollution mitigation techniques. While some innovative examples about their usage will be presented, the important roles of these applications in combating the environmental challenges will be addressed in a comprehensive manner. From an environmental perspective, pollution is the entry of contaminants into the environment that causes instability, disorder, harm, or discomfort to the ecosystem, including physical systems or living organisms. Geographically, the pollution remediation market is divided into North America, Europe, Asia, and the rest of the world. Of these, the Asia-Pacific region's pollution remediation market accounts for the largest share of total revenue. Due to the increase in the number of environmental regulations in the region, and the introduction of more stringent air, water, and soil regulations, the APAC environmental pollution market is expected to grow at a faster rate. Bioremediation is an advanced technique that uses biological systems such as plants, animals, and microbes to remediate the contaminated environment. Rapid industrialization has greatly increased environmental pollution and, with it, the widespread environmental footprint damage. Bioremediation is a quicker, more practical, and invaluable gift from nature. Metabolic, genetic, and environmental engineering are the three major mechanisms by which microorganisms improve the degradation of pollutants. Centralized and on-site approaches are examples of approaches to environmental technology accessibility. Various parameters, such as pH, temperature, moisture content, and oxygen content, play an important role in enhancing the microorganism's degradability. Various pollutants such as crude oil, PAHs, pesticides, and heavy metals can be treated by bioremediation. In numerous regions of the globe, bioremediation programs are perhaps one of the most productive methods for the implementation of pollution management. At a broad and limited scale, these can only deal with a limited number of chemical pollutants. Early contaminant compounds, and difficult to apply to a typical group of physical contaminants, for bioremediation. However, research efforts are compelled to understand these contaminants within the field of bioremediation and to improve bioremediation technology. With its concise adaptive methodology and its striking degree of variety of biological organisms, bioremediation facilitates direct application in many cases. In recycling and reusing the mobile form of waste, future compliance laws must drive industry awareness and promote significant movement in the bioremediation market [14].

5. Emerging Technologies in Pollution Control

While different technologies have been available or studied for specific toxic pollutants for quite some time, many of the advanced technologies are new or are under development. The accelerated interest and increased emphasis on the development of efficient technologies can be attributed to the severity of the environmental problems that some of them may cure. These technologies include advanced oxidation, laser-induced breakdown spectroscopy-based monitoring, TiO_2-based photocatalysis processes, sulfate radical-based AOPs, permanganate-based AOPs, stabilization of heavy metals through the formation of naturally occurring minerals, waste-to-energy conversion technologies, etc. Progress of the newer technologies naturally requires application to different platforms involving different contaminants and engineering challenges. In a broader sense, the development of more innovatively multi-purposed green materials can be important to handle various toxicity problems efficiently. In this contribution, recent literature for the treatment of inorganic water pollutants is surveyed from various platforms, and it is intended to ignite creative thinking and discussions that will facilitate a healthier world.

Innovative adverse effects of toxic contaminants are significantly on the rise due to modern ways of life and increased industrialization. Issues associated with commonly present heavy toxic metals such as lead, arsenic, chromium, mercury, and iron require immediate and systematic attention. Due to technological advancements, it is likely that the aquatic environment is now in greater jeopardy of exposure to a wider spectrum of inorganic chemical compounds. Some more advanced problems that need urgent attention include the release of accessory heavy metals and other important constituents such as beryllium, cadmium, copper, molybdenum, nickel, silver, tungsten, uranium, vanadium, and zinc, and their adverse effects on the environment and human health can be alarming. The ever-increasing detrimental effect of industrial wastewater chronic toxicity, particularly in oil sands processing operations, has attracted attention from researchers across disciplines. Tackling such issues is a critical task for environmental engineers. Decades of research have investigated various advanced technologies. The benefit of commercializing these technologies has resulted in solving some niche problems efficiently. However, they lack in addressing various complex real-world scenarios and cost parameters that need resolving. Therefore, it is important to bring these technologies to small-scale improvements and customize the technology in need towards the vast real-world scenario. [15][16][17]

5.1. Nanotechnology Applications

Despite significant efforts towards developing advanced technologies, many challenges are being faced in providing sustainable solutions for the existing and arising complex issues in environmental engineering. It is commonly agreed that these challenges demand multi-faceted and well-interconnecting innovative strategies. Because of the versatile and environmentally friendly nature of nanotechnology applications, some pioneering works are presented in this chapter. It is anticipated that the discussions of innovative applications on the subject will offer novel solutions to solve some complex and long-lasting environmental problems, inspire further research, and engage young researchers in the field. Due to superior performance and friendly characteristics, nanotechnological applications are preferred in addressing challenges in environmental issues. This section provides some pioneering applications in the area, including wastewater treatment, dye removal, organic matter compound abatement, heavy metal removal, air purification, bacterial disinfection, and waste recycling. All the application works are developed with lab- and/or pilot-scale units, and that deserves further effort to develop larger scale units, utilize effective coating materials, and achieve eventual commercialization. With those efforts, it is predicted that nanotechnology applications will certainly derive the most beneficial environmental science and technology and prosper in wide applications. [18][19][20]

6. Sustainable Solutions in Environmental Engineering

This paper introduces the reader to the framework of sustainability and outlines the principles of how these can be applied to engineering. In recent years, the environment and its protection have come to the fore as major global issues that need to be addressed. Events such as global warming, the depletion of the ozone layer and alarming increases in rates of desertification and deforestation bring home to society the vulnerable state of the earth. As the time has become more critical, Environmental Engineering has assumed an increasingly important role in specific relation to Engineering projects often have a significant impact on the environment, ranging from altering the natural landscape to changes in air quality. Consequently, growing importance is attached to an all-embracing concern about their environmental impact. Environmental Engineering, the philosophical approach to the design, operation, and management of projects from an environmentally sustainable perspective, has been integrated into civil, construction and process Engineering courses at a number of academic institutions. Sustainable Solutions in Environmental Engineering.

6.1. Circular Economy Principles

In recent decades, it has been widely recognized that environmental protection must be integrated into strategies throughout the entire product lifecycle. Pressure to the environment derives largely from the short use time of products, and great difficulty in dealing with the waste they generate. Feeding environmental considerations back into the design of products can decrease their environmental impact, which is the so-called concept of environmentally conscious design. While helping to prevent pollution and conserve resources, the disposal issues of waste can also be alleviated. The objective of environmentally conscious design is to increase the productivity and products that will cause the minimum environmental impact throughout their lifecycles. Therefore, the integration of environmental and economic considerations when choosing among different strategies is essential for those that partake in the development of environmental and industrial policy aimed at minimizing the environmental degradation of industrial activities established before. Policies for cleaner production include regulatory measures and economic instruments, and can be applied the adoption and better understanding of the optimal strategies for industrial sectors. Nevertheless, the search for answers to new environmental challenges motivates the development of new processes. The expansion of the modeling and simulation tools for environmental purposes can become a useful support for this task. Advances in cleaner products and technologies focusing on process-generated waste are of unquestionable importance for the involved sectors. Combining the integration of environmental and economic aspects into the structural models and the profitability analysis with a multi-objective optimization approach, it is discussed the concurrent analysis of the economic and environmental performance of different pollution control strategies in a system comprising process plants. [21][22]

7. Case Studies and Best Practices

Environmental engineering theories have evolved greatly in the last few decades. Innovative approaches and cutting-edge technologies show a wide range of applications and result in a variety of solutions, saving natural resources, energy, and water resources, as well as other major improvements. Some of these transfer and effectiveness, such as membrane bioreactors, electrochemical oxidation, and adsorption with granular activated carbon, are reviewed. Worldwide cases and practices of these innovative technologies and approaches are also presented, such as renewable energy generation at the water reclamation facility, air stripping in an aquifer to mitigate groundwater contamination, and microbial fuel cell technology for promoting sustainable resource recovery, including energy, nutrient, and water recovery [23]. The best practices and cases cover projects and applications in different geographical and cultural settings. The specific contexts of each case, the problems faced and the solutions adopted, and lessons learned and outcomes are analyzed more in detail.

In the past few years of researching, viewing worldwide successful projects and practices, have come to learn the importance of documenting the experiences gained during these projects and practices to improve both project methodologies and future policy. The contents cover: i) innovative approaches and advanced technologies in environmental engineering; ii) case studies and best practices globally; and iii) trouble shooting for the development of environmental engineering endeavors [24]. It is hoped that the practices given can be used as technical assistance and guidelines for policy backstopping; and furthermore, the problems and solutions faced during the implementing practices can be transferred to another and more corresponding level to support national and regional environmental engineering development.

7.1. Successful Implementation Examples

Today, environmental engineering plays a vital role in society due to the numerous challenges created by global climate change, urbanization, and industrialization. In this context, effective environmental management is critical to mitigate and prevent pollution; however, challenges remain in the creation and implementation of successful SMPs due to inappropriate or incomplete measures and stakeholder apathy. Over the past decade, significant efforts have been made to develop and implement advanced pollution control techniques and sustainable pollution management solutions.

This review seeks to provide empirical evidence for environmental practitioners and academics. Moreover, the comprehensive review is divided into two levels that focus on advanced pollution control techniques and collection systems aiming to address a broad range of pollution sources, following with consideration of different pollutants in a location and adoption of integrated sustainable measures dealing with multiple sectors and advanced technical approaches. Statistically, high knowledge gaps are on material contaminants and unsustainable measures. Additionally, stakeholder participation and pilot testing should also be enhanced during implementation as well as local context should be considered when applying transferable solutions, and a specific objective must be included to target the potential benefits. Furthermore, additional complimentary studies should be conducted in different geographical and socio-economic contexts.

Seven respective cases are provided, each of which described in detail methods, stakeholders, context, outcomes, challenges, and lessons learnt from the same format. Hopefully, this review would act as a timely remedy to shape the development of follow-up credible SMPs and fill up the current literature gap through a learning-by-modeling strategy, guiding academics, governments, investors, and designers towards proactive and effective efforts combating this unprecedented global pollution crisis. [25][26]

8. Future Trends in Environmental Engineering

Jobs and functions of tomorrow consist of currently unknown ones. Integrated in changing environments, hard work conditions have to be met for our species on this planet holding more and more global risks. Sustainability, resilience and support of social well-being, welfare and health become important issues for designing civilisation-compatible concepts. However, up to now there was no substantial training of engineers focusing on the above-mentioned conditions of work. Moreover, communication between authorities, providers of work equipment and services, designers, and the supervisory bodies dealing with questions of safety, health and work is usually lacking.

To engineer support of appropriate environmental working conditions, an elementary interdisciplinary course for students in engineering sciences, occupational hygiene, medicine and civil protection was started. Main considerations are close physical environments for at least eight hours a day, life-sustaining conditions in air, water and food, protection against thermal effects, noise, vibrations, radiations and noxious effects, training in fields of fire protection and prevention, civil protection and waste purification; last but not least community-compatible work. Given out years of experience with all its efforts and changes required is communicated.

8.1. Innovations and Research Directions

Environmental engineering is a quickly evolving field that tackles everything from intensive wastewater remediation through to enhancing manufacturing processes for decreased resource consumption and waste. Entire new movements in chemical processing have been driven by the need to comply with sectoral pollution touching water, air, and soil, including the dawn of "cleaner manufacturing". In more advanced economics trade moving towards cleaner manufacturing has been incentivised by financial completion, with the focus increasingly moving to end-of-pipe interventions and developing a new industry in environmental technologies. Methodologies associated with this new field range from discrete choice modelling of industrial reactions to economic treatments of industrial water flow, increasingly favouring a stream-sensitive approach. Innovative engineering solutions are being proposed showing how industrial emissions can be decreased by integration between waste streams which seems to promise a new genre of cleaner manufacturing as successful industries have intense energy consumption/production process needs. Some solutions are presented parametrically but it is clear that human expertise plays a crucial factor in fine tuning engineered options. Nonetheless, much innovation has yet to arise in less energy / carbon intensive areas, like e.g. agriculture. A much more effective carbon offset regime could be structured to include innovation efforts in this sector which are presently paltry [27]. For other enterprises, despite recent enforcement, the financial costs of coming clean are too prohibitive and instead opportunities are being taken to relocate operations across borders. There are still lots of questions and much more research to do before environmental engineering evolves a new field of scientific research, adheres to its experimental obligation to test and retest its findings, and is able to collaborate with other scientists in disciplines such as toxicology, atmospheric science, and environmental health which directly impact on industry processes. There are further concerns about addressing the knowledge deficit in countries undergoing industrialisation, creating the sense of urgency to provide a focus on methodological research, and to specifically request proposals that offer a research response to these deficits. Public support is growing but much more needs to be done to make sustainable environmental engineering innovation live up to its expectations. Thus, much more needs to be done to promote broad-based understanding as to what sustainable solutions entail, to identify pragmatic alternatives, and to address the wider sustainable policy challenges arising from growing capacity addition.

Conclusion

Research and development in the environmental sector are strongly required in order to achieve significant improvements with regard to pollution control and the overall quality of the environment. The use of innovative technical solutions in this field, based on new and unconventional approaches, has been identified as a key issue in nearly all developed countries within their research agendas. In order to maintain and improve living standards, society allocates large amounts of resources to the development of new and greener processes in virtually all industrial sectors. The continuous improvement in the way we face pollution control and natural resources management problems, in terms of end of pipe solutions and cleaner production techniques, is a fundamental step towards the definition of innovative and integrated environmental policies for sustainable development both at the local and national levels. The determining factor supporting the practical implementation of environmental policies is the ability of private industry to provide appropriate and cost-effective technological solutions. Lessons that can be learned are related to the demonstration of the importance of an interdisciplinary approach in the field of environmental preservation and restoration, and the practical role of regulatory frameworks designed to support and encourage environmental innovation and investments. Optimizing for zero, the level of pollution emissions during production processes and/or the ability to develop alternative new products using industrial byproducts, instead of depleting natural resources, seems to represent significant objectives for an increasingly complex society. Major initiatives aiming at providing suitable funds for activities linked to this research and innovation process are being implemented, both at the national and international levels, under the impulse of recognized government institutions and nongovernment organizations. In this context, nudging widespread use of renewable resources, promoting the production of less-toxic synthetic compounds as well as the biotechnological development of aerobic and anaerobic bioreactor-seeded or consolidated with environmental microbes, can foster a new clean and cooperative biology era, that can contribute to the global agreement on environmental sustainability. This presents an exhaustive sample of the works that have been carried out in this area by several more experienced researchers who achieved significant and relevant contributions in the related subsectors. Their efforts are strongly required in order to understand the effectiveness of pollutants removal and to define their potential applications, at both laboratory and real scale. Only through a continuous exchange of ideas, experiences, and results, can further achievements aimed at providing a useful contribution in the establishment of a common scenario for defining and achieving a general environmental improvement be realized.

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