
Contents

Foreword	ix
Introduction	xiii
Chapter 1. Environmental Innovation: A Controversial Doctrine	1
1.1. Progressive conceptualization of “environmental innovation”: a journey back through 40 years of controversies	3
1.1.1. Environmental concerns and innovations: the first proposals of economic theory during the 1970s	4
1.1.2. Involvement in environmental technologies and green growth in the 1980s	13
1.1.3. Diverse theoretical appropriations of the concept by economic sciences from the 1990s onwards	18
1.1.4. Conceptual beginnings and an existential crisis in environmental innovations during the 2000s	24
1.2. Critical analysis of the typology of environmental innovations	33
1.2.1. Degrees of change of environmental innovation.	34
1.2.2. “End-of-pipe” technologies: a limited palliative approach to conservation of the environment?	36
1.2.3. Clean technologies, a preventive, radical and modular approach	39
1.2.4. The circular economy: Another form of systemic environmental innovation	42
1.2.5. The quest for eco-efficiency, an objective based on a productivist approach	50

1.3. Drivers of environmental innovation in the face of institutional tensions	55
1.3.1. Modifying the dominant design, thanks to transition management theory	56
1.3.2. Moving towards a specificity of technological trajectories of environmental innovations?	59
1.3.3. Creation of technical conventions promoting conservation of the environment.	64
1.3.4. The rebound effect, the forgotten impacts and macrosystemic crises	70
1.4. Conclusion	76
Chapter 2. Ecodesign and Technological Change: A Missed Opportunity?	79
2.1. Ecodesign and the dispute over methods	80
2.1.1. Ecodesign during the 1970s, the metronome of a new mode of development.	81
2.1.2. First theorization and confrontation with reality during the course of the 1980s.	85
2.1.3. Birth of sustainable development and a rocky start for industrialists.	86
2.1.4. The limited effects of an “open” ecodesign philosophy	88
2.2. The main determining factors of ecodesign	96
2.2.1. Integration of the environment: the end result of total quality management.	96
2.2.2. Towards environmental declarations about products	104
2.2.3. A multitude of tools to encourage ecodesign.	106
2.3. Product life cycle analysis: a limited tool for decision-making in the face of complexity	107
2.3.1. Towards supremacy of the life cycle analysis	108
2.3.2. Product life cycle analysis: a tool weakened by complexity	113
2.4. Ecodesign confronted with environmental and economic problems	116
2.4.1. The different concepts of the environment, a multi-dimensional and complex notion	117
2.4.2. The environment from the perspective of Boltanski and Thévenot’s “worlds”	118
2.4.3. Towards a “tragedy of change”?	121
2.5. Conclusion	126

Conclusion	129
Appendix	133
Bibliography	143
Index	165