



Sustainability Considerations for Procurement Tools and Capabilities: Summary of a Workshop

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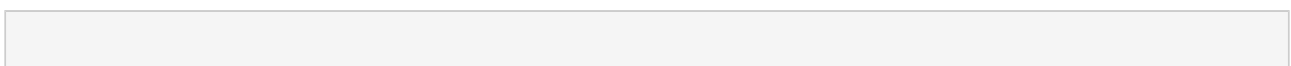
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Federal laws, regulations, and executive orders have imposed requirements for federal agencies to move toward the sustainable acquisition of goods and services, including the incorporation of sustainable purchasing into federal agency decision making. Since the federal government is such a significant player in the market, its move to incorporate sustainable procurement practices could have a profound impact on the types of products being developed for the market as a whole.

The General Services Administration (GSA) has played a key role in furthering sustainable procurement practices throughout the federal government. GSA is responsible for formulating and maintaining government-wide policies covering a variety of administrative actions, including those related to procurement and management. GSA has several ongoing activities related to sustainable procurement to assess the feasibility of working with the federal supplier community - vendors and contractors that serve federal agencies to measure and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the supply chain while encouraging sustainable operations among suppliers. GSA has also been actively developing programs to assist federal agencies in making sustainable procurement decisions. As federal agencies cannot directly fund the development of sustainable procurement tools, they are particularly interested in understanding how to foster innovation and provide incentives for collaboration between developers and users of tools for sustainable purchasing throughout the supply chain. The training of procurement professionals is also a priority for these agencies.

To assist efforts to build sustainability considerations into the procurement process, the National Research Council appointed a committee to organize a two-day workshop that explored ways to better incorporate sustainability considerations into procurement tools and capabilities across the public and private sectors. The workshop was designed to help participants assess the current landscape of green purchasing tools, identify emerging needs for enhanced or new tools and opportunities to develop them, identify potential barriers to progress, and explore potential solutions. The workshop provided an opportunity for participants to discuss challenges related to sustainable purchasing and to developing new procurement tools. *Sustainability Considerations for Procurement Tools and Capabilities* reviews the presenters' recommendations and tools currently used in sustainable procurement, such as databases for ecolabels and standards, codes, or regulations and other nontechnological tools such as policies, frameworks, rating systems, and product indexes.



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