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## DESIGN OF A MEASUREMENT MODEL FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE: APPLICATION TO THE FOOD SECTOR

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### Abstract

In light of recent environmental crises, companies are rethinking their relations with key stakeholders who live in the environments in which they operate. To meet the expectations of groups concerned about the environment, companies must adopt a responsible attitude for their surroundings to maintain sustainable development. Environmental monitoring is not always easy, given the many environmental consequences generated by business activities. This study proposes an innovative measurement model for environmental management that adopts a systematic method for measuring and evaluating the environmental aspects of a firm's activities and provides support for decision making about investments in environmental matters, to maximize the reduction of environmental impacts at minimal cost. This model has been implemented in five food companies, representing one of the sectors with the greatest number of production centers in Spain. The longitudinal case study makes it possible to evaluate the system over a period of time, uncover areas that require further improvement, and validate the management system. The empirical findings indicate that the implementation of the measurement model reduces a firm's environmental impacts in a relatively short period of time by providing the necessary tools to improve the management of certain environmental aspects of an enterprise's production processes. The study discusses the strengths and weaknesses of the model and offers recommendations for further research.

*Key words:* corporate social responsibility, measurement model for environmental management, food sector

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