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"The Origins and Purpose of Eco-Innovation"

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Nowadays, eco-friendly technologies are considered a strategic objective in industrialised countries. Rising demand for more sustainable products and services from civil society has become a major challenge for policy makers. The present article aims to provide a historical perspective on the concept of eco-innovation, its different meanings and its position in the modern debate around sustainability. The first part of the article explores the origins of the notion of eco-innovation, drawing on the Sustainable Development debate. The second part attempts to shed light on the purpose of eco-innovation and its implications for a desirable sustainable transition in modern industrial societies. This part illustrates the essential differences between mainstream economics and the School of Ecological Economics. Finally, the third part attempts to describe the social and institutional changes necessary to foster eco-innovation.

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