

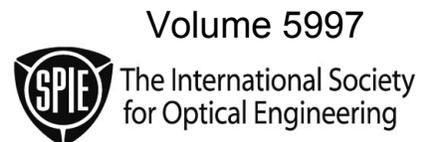
PROCEEDINGS OF SPIE

# ***Environmentally Conscious Manufacturing V***

**Surendra M. Gupta**  
*Chair/Editor*

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# Contents

- vii *Conference Committee*  
ix *Introduction*

---

## SESSION 1 DISASSEMBLY

---

- 599701 **A multi-start greedy heuristic for the disassembly sequence problem** [5997-01]  
B. Adenso-Díaz, B. González, S. García, Y. Barba, Univ. de Oviedo (Spain)
- 599702 **Multi-criteria decision making approach in multiple periods for a disassembly-to-order system under product's deterioration and stochastic yields** [5997-02]  
P. Imtananavich, S. M. Gupta, Northeastern Univ. (USA)
- 599703 **Environmental practices of the auxiliary companies to the Spanish automobile industry** [5997-31]  
P. L. González-Torre, B. A. González, Univ. de Oviedo (Spain); S. M. Gupta, Northeastern Univ. (USA)
- 599704 **Multi-kanban mechanism for appliance disassembly** [5997-04]  
G. Udomsawat, S. M. Gupta, Northeastern Univ. (USA)

---

## SESSION 2 REVERSE LOGISTICS AND SUPPLY CHAIN

---

- 599706 **Mechanism for coordination between the collector and the dismantler in a reverse supply chain** [5997-06]  
K. K. Pochampally, Southern New Hampshire Univ. (USA); S. M. Gupta, Northeastern Univ. (USA)
- 599707 **A heuristic approach using multiple criteria for environmentally benign 3PLs selection** [5997-07]  
E. Kongar, Yildiz Technical Univ. (Turkey)
- 599708 **A fuzzy AHP-based approach for selecting potential recovery facilities in a closed-loop supply chain** [5997-08]  
S. Nukala, S. M. Gupta, Northeastern Univ. (USA)
- 599709 **An integrated conceptual framework for selecting reverse logistics providers in the presence of vagueness** [5997-09]  
T. Firdolaş, S. Önüt, E. Kongar, Yildiz Technical Univ. (Turkey)

---

## SESSION 3 DISASSEMBLY LINE

---

- 59970A **A heuristic solution for the disassembly line balancing problem incorporating sequence dependent costs** [5997-11]  
A. J. D. Lambert, Technische Univ. Eindhoven (Netherlands); S. M. Gupta, Northeastern Univ. (USA)

- 59970B **Uninformed and probabilistic distributed agent combinatorial searches for the unary NP-complete disassembly line balancing problem** [5997-12]  
S. M. McGovern, S. M. Gupta, Northeastern Univ. (USA)
- 59970C **The effect of sudden server breakdown on the performance of a disassembly line** [5997-13]  
G. Udomsawat, S. M. Gupta, Northeastern Univ. (USA)
- 59970D **Impact of different disassembly line balancing algorithms on the performance of dynamic kanban system for disassembly line** [5997-14]  
E. A. Kizilkaya, S. M. Gupta, Northeastern Univ. (USA)

---

#### **SESSION 4 ORGANIC WASTE AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

- 59970E **Developing a framework for applying disassembly planning and demanufacturing modeling to organic processing waste streams** [5997-15]  
K. A. Rosentrater, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USA); Y. Tang, Rowan Univ. (USA)
- 59970F **Modeling the economics of landfilling organic processing waste streams** [5997-17]  
K. A. Rosentrater, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USA)

---

#### **SESSION 5 PRODUCT RECOVERY AND REMANUFACTURING**

- 59970G **Practical LCA for short shelf life products** [5997-19]  
L. Laurin, EarthShift (USA); M. Goedkoop, PRé Consultants bv (Netherlands); G. Norris, Sylvatica (USA)
- 59970H **Optimal production policy for a remanufacturing system with virtual inventory cost** [5997-20]  
K. Nakashima, Osaka Institute of Technology (Japan); S. M. Gupta, Northeastern Univ. (USA)
- 59970I **Pricing end-of-life components** [5997-21]  
S. Vadde, S. V. Kamarthi, S. M. Gupta, Northeastern Univ. (USA)
- 59970J **Multi-criteria analysis of potential recovery facilities in a reverse supply chain** [5997-22]  
S. Nukala, S. M. Gupta, Northeastern Univ. (USA)
- 59970K **Understanding facilities design parameters for a remanufacturing system** [5997-23]  
A. Topcu, T. Cullinane, Northeastern Univ. (USA)

---

#### **SESSION 6 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

- 59970L **Eco-efficiency of solid waste management in Welsh SMEs** [5997-24]  
J. Sarkis, Clark Univ. (USA); J. Dijkshoom, Cardiff Univ. (United Kingdom)
- 59970M **A quadranominal real options model for evaluation of emissions trading and technology** [5997-25]  
J. Sarkis, M. Tamarkin, Clark Univ. (USA)

- 59970O **A simulation study for the application of two different neural network control algorithms on an electrohydraulic system** [5997-28]  
İ. İstif, Yıldız Technical Univ. (Turkey)
- 59970P **Quality of returns: Is it a factor in remanufacturing?** [5997-29]  
H. Behret, A. Korugan, Boğaziçi Univ. (Turkey)
- 59970Q **On the effect of part quality in hybrid production systems** [5997-30]  
N. Yasin Ateş, A. Korugan, Boğaziçi Univ. (Turkey)

*Author Index*



# Conference Committee

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- 3 Disassembly Line  
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- 5 Product Recovery and Remanufacturing  
**Joseph Sarkis**, Clark University (USA)
- 6 Environmental Issues  
**Surendra M. Gupta**, Northeastern University (USA)



## Introduction

Environmentally Conscious Manufacturing (ECM) is an emerging discipline that is concerned with developing methods for manufacturing new products from conceptual design to final delivery and ultimately to product recovery and, only as a last resort, end-of-life disposal such that all the environmental standards and requirements are satisfied.

Industrialized countries all over the world are facing the serious aftermath of the rapid development that has taken place in the last few decades. In recent years, environmental awareness and recycling regulations have been putting pressure on many manufacturers and consumers, forcing them to produce and dispose of products in an environmentally responsible manner. Government regulations are becoming more persuasive and thus many manufacturers feel the pressure to use recycled materials whenever possible. Occasionally, they are even required to take care of their products at the end of their useful lives. This has created a need to design products that are friendly towards the environment, and easy to disassemble and recycle. To that end, there is a need to develop algorithms, models, heuristics, and software for addressing recycling and other end-of-life issues (such as the economic viability and the logistic aspects of disassembly, recycling, and remanufacturing) for an ever-increasing number of discarded products.

The Fifth International Conference on Environmentally Conscious Manufacturing (ECM) that took place in Boston, Massachusetts, USA, October 23-24, 2005, attempted to do its part in addressing the above-mentioned needs. Both academicians and the industrial community in the United States and abroad participated in this timely conference. The conference provided a forum for the latest developments in the field of ECM.

This volume is a compilation of the papers selected for the conference. The papers included here represent the wide variety of fronts where research activities are taking place in the general area of ECM. Based on the quality and variety of papers included in this volume, it is clear that the conference was a success. It is my hope that this volume will inspire further research in ECM and motivate new researchers to get interested in this all too important field of study.

The conference and this volume would not have been possible without the devotion and commitment of the authors. They have been very patient in preparing their manuscripts. I would also like to express my appreciation for having been given the opportunity to organize and chair this conference. I specially want to thank the SPIE staff for providing seamless support in unraveling all of the obstacles that arose in putting the conference and this volume together.

**Surendra M. Gupta**

