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1 Outlook on biofuels in future studies: A systematic literature review

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8 Abstract

9

10 Foresight methods are useful for long-range planning such as strategic energy management, energy policy, and renewable and sustainable energy planning to manage uncertainties. Futures studies may 11 12 affect the anticipation and speculation of future and emerging technologies. In this paper, biofuels futures are explored based on a critical evaluation of the literature to draw the state-of-the-art for the 13 14 future-oriented biofuel research. A six-fold typology mapping from two main futures studies 15 methodologies is used. (i) descriptive scenarios, forecasts, and statistical scenarios as descriptive 16 methods; (ii) roadmaps, visions, and backcasts as prescriptive methods. The expectations embodied in 17 the literature are then explored through deriving research challenges about the future of biofuels: (1) the main motives and driving forces in a biofuel era; (2) the main obstacles or difficulties confronting a 18 19 biofuel era; (3) the plausibility and importance of each of different scenarios; (4) key technological 20 breakthroughs for the bioeconomy; (5) details about development, maturity and flourish; (6) biofuel 21 era's significant achievement. The literature explains a wide range of plausible futures, from centralized 22 systems related to technological breakthroughs to decentralized systems based on small-scale 23 renewable. Fundamental technological elements are uncovered, and a plausible biofuel economy is 24 drawn along with the necessary pathway to reach it. The review shows a general agreement that a 25 biofuel economy would develop gradually, and a prompt shift to biofuels would require powerful 26 governmental support coupled with significant disruptions such as changes in environmental principles 27 of countries, technology breakthroughs, higher oil prices, and urgency of climate change.

28

29 Keywords: Biofuels; future studies; roadmapping; foresight; forecast; scenario planning

30 1 Introduction

Foresight methods such as roadmaps and scenarios are increasingly utilized in policymaking, academic research, or industrial applications to manage uncertainties in long-range planning, e.g., energy or transport policy [1-5]. This also includes published future-oriented literature on biofuel as a renewable and sustainable energy source and a perceived biofuel era as part of the energy transition to clean energy [6-9]. The literature on the future potential of biofuels is ample consisting of scientific articles [10-22], reports [6, 23-30], authoritative advocacy [31, 32], and governmental documents [23, 29, 33-35], among others. Importantly, foresight studies could potentially also influence the common outlook of the future,

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e.g., the future of biofuels, through building rigorous expectations of the sustainability of the evolving
technological advances, but also assembling financial, intellectual, institutional, and political means
required for their achievement [36].

4 The literature on biofuel reviews is extensive, for example on biofuels in international transportation, 5 energy market, and economic modeling were reviewed [37]. The biofuel supply chain is another 6 important issue and includes huge uncertainty. The evolution of biofuels and the biofuel supply chain's 7 general structure considering different degrees of uncertainity in decision-making have been reviewed 8 in [38]. Some studies have focused on one type of biofuels only. For example, the biodiesel industry's 9 current scenarios on glycerol production and its global markets were studied in [39]. Biodiesel 10 development scenarios, residues, oil extraction, and biogas production have reviewed in [40]. 11 Furthermore, the advantages of biodiesel have been compared to fossil fuel and biodiesel's potential by 12 various feedstocks, including waste plastic and cooking oil were identified [41]. Biofuel-based hydrogen 13 is another category that is gaining extensive attention For example, comprehensive coverage of wider 14 use of biofuel-based hydrogen in the energy system, including recent developments and insights 15 particularly in Europe, Asia, and the USA were provided in [43]. Future-based studies of the biofuel-based 16 hydrogen energy sources were reviewed in [44].

17 The recent trends in global production and the utilization of bio-ethanol fuel were reviewed in [42]. A

detailed survey of bagasse, its raw materials, the state-of-the-art for cellulosic ethanol production and
 its use for generating electricity were provided in [45]. Also, the published literature on the current
 technologies for sustainable bioethanol production from agro-residues were reviewed [46].

Also, some of the reviews have focused on a specific geographical location only, e.g. Iranian biodiesel development, including waste oil biodiesel utilization scenarios [14]. Some of the reviews are focused on models for biofuel use in the energy systems, e.g. biofuel utilization models in the UK [47]. Besides, 75 modeling tools currently used for analyzing energy and electricity systems considering biofuel as an alternative were reviewed in [48].

A state-of-the-art review on the sustainability assessment of biofuels can be found in [49]. Evaluation of the emissions characteristics of 2nd and 3rd generation biofuels were reviewed in [50]. Also, the literature on biogas life-cycle assessments based on a wide range of feedstocks and technologies were critically evaluated in [51]. Similarly, a life-cycle assessment approach was used in [52] to estimate greenhouse gas emissions produced by second and third-generation biofuels.

- Some studies have reviewed the political and economic impacts of biofuels [10, 52, 53]. The potential and of combined ethanol and diesel fuel conventional engines were reviewed in [54].
- Many reviews investigate the available potential supply and demand for biofuels. For instance, existing studies on biofuel potentials along with current biofuel conversion methods were reviewed in [55]. The global history, current status, trends and future of bioenergy and biofuels t were reviewed [13] in. Limited number of reviews focus on the biofuels' share in the global energy market and future energy supply [56].

There are some limitations and gaps in the above-mentioned reviews: (1) they are mainly quantitative projections with many simplifying assumptions and casting some doubts on the numerical predictions' validity. In contrast, the current review is based on qualitative and quantitative foresight methods analyzing different uncertain scenarios without simplifying assumptions. (2) they focused either on specific kinds of biofuels, specific regions and geographical locations, or the biofuels' technical performance, without providing a complete view. This review paper will address these gaps, and it will present findings that are of interest to a broad range of target groups, including energy systems designers; energy and climate policymakers; energy and environmental engineers dealing with transportation, industry, building, electricity generation and management; and, sustainability and nutrient-energy-water nexus experts. Also, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers in futures studies and technological forecasting domains are other target groups of this review paper.

8 To address these gaps, a thorough overview of the contemporary future-oriented studies on biofuels is 9 presented. The survey done intends to cover a broad range of literature on different views on the biofuel 10 futures by classifying the studies and identifying their purposes. Important questions raised in the review 11 include, e.g., how were the studies put together, what kind of standpoint do the studies have on the 12 future and technological change, and what time horizons are considered, among others. To address 13 these questions, along with keeping the generality of the paper, a clear definition of biofuel is needed. 14 In the published literature, the definition of biofuel is broad and not always consistent. Most of the 15 studies available refer to the first- and second-generation liquid biofuels [14, 26, 39, 42, 50, 57-62] and 16 some to third-generation, e.g., lignocellulosic fuels [13, 16, 63-67]. Here the main focus is on biomass-17 derived fuels for transportation, power generation, heating, and combined heat and power. This framing 18 of biofuels is used throughout this paper.

19 The layout of the review is structured as follows: In Section 2, the review process is described. In Section 20 3, based on goals, different approaches, and explanations of these studies, the classification of published 21 future-oriented biofuel research is proposed. Six classes of studies were recognized, including (i) 22 Descriptive Scenarios; (ii) Statistical scenarios; (iii) Roadmaping studies; (iv) Forecasting studies; (v) 23 Shared visions; and (vi) Pathways and backcasts. Then, in Section 4, the literature is further analyzed 24 against pressing research challenges on the main features of the biofuel energy era, including (1) the 25 main motives and driving forces in a biofuel era; (2) the main obstacles or difficulties confronting a 26 biofuel era; (3) the plausibility and importance of each of different scenarios; (4) key technological 27 breakthroughs for the bioeconomy; (5) details about development, maturity and flourish; (6) biofuel 28 era's significant achievement. Finally, in Section 5, the paper is concluded by providing a comprehensive 29 discussion of the observations, takeaways, and lessons learned.

30 2 Method

31 In order to address the above research challenges, we performed a comprehensive systematic literature 32 search through the major academic databases, including Scopus, Springerlink, ScienceDirect, IEEEXplore, 33 and ACM Digital Library. The bibliographic databases were searched for biofuel-related fields such as all 34 generations of biofuels and different kinds, including biodiesel, green diesel, ethanol, straight vegetable 35 oil, biogas, bioethers, syngas, and other bioalcohols. Boolean operators "or" and "and" are used to combine the search keywords "biofuel," "future," and a third word determining the specific future-36 37 oriented biofuel research, including keywords such as 'biofuel'; 'scenario'; 'roadmap'; 'foresight'; 38 'forecast'; 'economy'; 'vision'; 'route-map'; 'backcasting'; 'pathway'. The literature search was last 39 updated on July 8, 2020.

1 In order to identify which articles to examine, an exclusion stage has been completed to omit non-English

2 articles, articles that are not relevant to the biofuel, its applications and its futures, and articles that only

3 theoretically address the technologies of biofuel (e.g., biofuel conversion and exergy technologies) in

- 4 general. Error! Reference source not found. shows a flow diagram of the search procedure applied for
- 5 this review paper.



6

7 Figure 1. Article search procedure (last updated on July 8, 2020).

8 The studies included here explained a biofuel future or depicted a plan or path to evolve a biofuel future.

9 The studies analyzed had a global outreach, but several of these were, in particular, relevant to the USA.

10 Over 171 papers published from 1995 to 2020 are included in the analysis. The majority of the studies

11 regarded biofuels in a more generic setting, including diverse production paths and practices. Some had

12 a focus on biofuel in transportation, while a few highlighted fixed fuel cell applications. All the studies

13 were analyzed according to a standard template to ensure consistency and develop a classification of

14 biofuel futures.

15 **3 Classification of biofuel futures**

16 The review is classified into six different, but overlapping types of biofuel futures studies. They are 17 further categorized as explanatory and prescriptive approaches. In Table 1, the details of the 18 categorization are shown.

19

20 Table 1. Categorization of biofuel futures.

Type of study	Description		
Descriptive	Forecasts, descriptive scenarios, and statistical scenarios are included in this category.		
methods	Forecasting studies are conducted based on the statistical formulation to identify the		
	business as usual, most probable futures as the continuation of the existent patterns.		
	Descriptive scenarios examine potential and alternative futures. Motives are		
	highlighted, but a predetermined pleasing destination based on that storylines are		
	not defined. Statistical scenarios are used to investigate the plausible future biofuel-		

based technological systems. The technical viability and quantifiable consequences of each choice are emphasized instead of narrating the storylines of different scenarios.

Prescriptive Visions, as one of the main prescriptive methods, are explanations of favorable and believable scenarios. The advantages of biofuels are emphasized and instead of exploring the possible scenarios a biofuel era can be evolved. Backcasts are another prescriptive method that begins from a favorable and believable future and plans backward to define strategies to achieve the desired goal. Another primary prescriptive method is roadmaping, which illustrates a series of planned actions to make the believable scenario possible.

1 In the following section, the specific types of futures studies found for biofuels are described in detail.

2 The first category which has been gained the most attention is the forecasting studies category.

3 3.1 Forecasting studies

4 Forecasts are studies that use quantitative tools to foresee different scenarios using existent patterns 5 and experts' judgment [68]. They study shorter time horizons (up to 2035). Three different roadmaps for 6 biofuels cover predictions on market dynamics [24, 25, 27]. Usually, demand forecasts, oil price or fuel 7 cost predictions, technological learning curves, and the features of competing technologies are utilized 8 as input data to model how biofuel enters the market [13, 59, 69, 70]. Forecasts are sometimes used as 9 different scenarios by changing the input assumptions to analyze how various factors affect the modeling 10 of biofuel's future. One of the most fundamental forecasting practices in the published literature solely 11 extrapolates selling patterns from 2005 to 2050 to predict stable biofuel market increase to 2050 [25].

12 Based on forecasting studies, the popularity of biofuel technologies in the future depends on their 13 charges in comparison to surrogate methods and technologies. Nevertheless, some of the studies 14 mentioned above analyze the impacts of policy interferences, like GHG penalties. Based on forecasting 15 studies, in evaluating what key advancements need to take place to facilitate the development process 16 of the biofuel economy, these studies concentrated on substantial technological issues (such as the cost 17 of kWh electricity produced by biofuels). The focal challenge for a biofuel economy is to decrease the expense of the technologies and facilities required for biofuel development and provide the necessary 18 19 facilities for biofuels to enter the market (e.g., building a refueling set up).

20 Contrary to other reviewed studies, biofuel is considered in a broader energy network setting and 21 competing technologies in forecasting studies. Nevertheless, they are also criticized for their 22 uncertainties on the future [38, 71-74] and technological transitions [75, 76], which also questions the 23 hypothesis of substituting old mechanisms by newly developed ones without disrupting the mainstream 24 paradigm or infrastructure where they function, also overlooking the necessity of new business models, 25 changing institutions, new user habits and models of consumption [2, 72, 77-79]. Therefore, these 26 projections may not be very useful in helping to realize the intricate transformation process of large-27 scale technological systems. In Table 2, an overview of the categories of forecasts is presented.

28 Table 2. Categories of forecasting studies.

Study	Summarized explanation
[13]	Studied vehicles that can use biodiesel and fuel cells (FC), their market invasion, different
	possible forecasts, and the sensitivity of the price of the technology to industrial development,

Study	Summarized explanation
	oil price, and environmental policies like the carbon tax. In their study, the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS) model is used to develop different scenarios.
[59]	Used a mathematical formulation to show the distribution of FC for electricity production, investigating FC use changes based on variations in fuel prices.
[70]	Used a model to analyze the FC popularity in the energy market and forecast FC car acceptance beneath the US Green Car charge estimated investment returns and social trade-off of cost/benefit.
[68]	Used an expert judgment to predict the advancements in fuel cell technology.
[55]	Estimated the yearly demand for biomass for EU energy by 2020.

1 **3.2** Descriptive scenarios (DS)

2 DS is developed to project the long-run futures (time horizon between 2030 and 2100) and contain 3 disruptive changes (developments which can break the trend). DS aims to advise policy-making by 4 revealing primary driving forces for the transition instead of deductive reasoning from historical data 5 trends. In DS, generally, storylines are outlined to elaborate a range of believable scenarios based on 6 experts' implicit knowledge and make sure that they are consistent internally. While considering the 7 likelihood of surprising changes are known as the main advantage of this approach [2, 76-85], this 8 likelihood is discussed explicitly in just two reviewed descriptive studies [20, 28]. However, disruptive 9 change (e.g., extensive social principles) is mentioned in [53, 60, 86]. Likewise, although some studies 10 have highlighted the significance of participatory methods in descriptive scenario planning [76, 80], the 11 study only in [20], [39], and [42] included stakeholders in the scenario creation process. Some of these 12 descriptive studies have clear evidence of technological transition hypotheses, including Schoemaker's 13 strategic thinking viewpoint of technological change [87] used by [88], unlike the majority of studies 14 analyzed in this article.

15 Three of the reviewed descriptive studies, such as the US Foresight framework [89], [28], and [90], 16 created current scenarios. These studies investigated the possibility of biofuels in their business as usual 17 scenarios and employed quantitative models (such as POLES [37, 91-94], purpose-built THESIS [53, 86, 95-97], Markal [98-101], or MESSAGE-MACRO [47, 48, 102-104]) to enhance and quantify the scenario 18 19 outcomes. Other descriptive studies build unique outlines and scenarios to investigate the circumstances 20 under which a biofuel future might unfold [20, 28, 42, 105]. This included recognizing driving forces that 21 are expected to be necessary for biofuel evolution and the shift to a biofuel era. Some literature 22 considered a robust pro-biofuel plan to study these policies' ramifications in a combination of future 23 scenarios [88]. Table 3 summarizes our analysis of the DS. As shown in Table 3, descriptive studies are a 24 more structured method of considering the driving forces, although they emphasize more forces on a 25 holistic level. This method has been scrutinized as being highly top-down and holistic [87]. Nevertheless, 26 when analyzing long-range time horizons, its ability to generate a helpful tool for obtaining various 27 transformation aspects is arguable. Therefore, these issues are addressed in the studies critically 28 evaluated in Table 3.

29

1 Table 3. Papers categorized as DS.

Paper	Summarized explanation	Aspects	Presumed correlations
[88]	Employed participatory practice using qualitative scenarios to elaborate likely notions for biofuel evolution.	The intensity of climate change effects Not stated as aspects for transition The offset of power: state vs. market Security of fossil fuel sources	Environmental issues change based on the relationship between the state and market, where the most market-based scenario causes the least concern
[42]	Built scenarios for different levels of biofuel apprehension based on statistical time series data.	Social and environmental principals Level of technological change Level of economic development Price of current energy sources	Economic development identifies energy price and technological change. Environmental principals the highest in the highly developed market and the least in the less developed world.
[86]	Scenarios built and explained based on Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) analysis on carbon emission.	Utilized the elements of the IPCC's report on emissions plans, levels of biofuel entry into it is identified by the national administratives' support	Robust environmental principles and universally harmonized decision making let stable and constant economic development.
[53]	Assumed the scenarios created in [86] to be the reference point, and instead of that, two surrogate biofuel scenarios are analyzed, with high and low biofuel understanding.	Utilized the elements of the IPCC's report on emissions plans, levels of biofuel entry into it is identified by the national administratives' support	Robust environmental principles and universally harmonized decision making let stable and constant economic development.
[105]	Studied the development in 3 sets of infrastructures: communications, electricity grids, road transportation, and utilizes these social and technological patterns to study biofuels' future as portable interactions and electricity architectures.	Studied one future defined by three driving forces Mobility advancement Mobile energy demand advancement Mobile communications advancement	The presumed correlation between the three aspects.
[20]	Several qualitative prospects were designed about the degree	Social and environmental principals level of technological change	Increased social principals may increase the acceptability of research

	of technological transition and prevailing social principals.		and development grants and encouraging a quicker technological transition.
[28]	Studied two different future narratives: one of them elaborates a plausible scenario for biofuel coming out of radical innovation in biofuel storage.	Lack of resource Technological development Personal and social primacies	Presumed correlations are not evident.
[39]	Utilized the UK Department for Trade Industry foresight basis for building four qualitative scenarios.	Globalization vs. autonomy as governance platforms Social and environmental principals	Presumes that the level of economic development and technological change is resulting from these essential aspects of transition.

1

Most of the descriptive studies analyzed in this study comprise a storyline with a definite end, where GHG emissions are drastically decreased. These scenarios include fast technological shifts combined with a socially liable and internationally well-organized community and an essential biofuels role. This shows a desire to obtain 'happy ends' (in this case, a pro-biofuel end) in these exercises. However, descriptive scenarios are recognized as being more structured methods to understand the driving forces that shape the future. Therefore, deriving driving forces for biofuel's future is only possible from the descriptive scenarios, and these studies are very special in that sense.

9 3.3 Statistical scenarios

Statistical scenarios provide more details about the system under analysis and their operation in the future. This kind of scenario aims not to forecast the adoption of a new type of vehicles or fuels but rather to analyze the ramifications of a large-scale change [106]. A wide range of plausible biofuel economies and evaluations of their consequences are examined using a given set of measures, including technical viability, economic feasibility, and environmental friendliness (GHG emissions). These studies were summarized in Table 4. Although this kind of study can help evaluate different scenarios, the social aspects of the biofuel transition are usually ignored.

In these studies, the future is seen as a set of constant technological choices, instead of narratives for a
 technological transition. The majority of the studies [50, 106-109] assume a future biofuel demand and
 design likely systems that could satisfy that demand.

In the statistical studies, technological evolution motives are reflected at a macro level, e.g., improving energy security and reducing GHG emissions. Simultaneously, the main obstacles recognized are the scarcity of renewable resources and the higher cost of biofuel technologies. Notwithstanding, these studies do not strive to analyze the dynamics of the system changes. Hence, they do not investigate the entire parameter range that could improve or prevent specific futures from evolving or how a biofuel infrastructure might emerge.

26

1 Table 4. Studies categorized as statistical scenarios.

Study	Summary of explanation
[50]	Utilized explanatory scenarios to speculate about the energy demand circumstances in 2050 time horizon and explored the greenhouse gas emissions of surrogate likely technological schemes which would satisfy that demand.
[106]	Studied consequences of meeting the demand for transportation through biofuel, based on prediction for 2050. Also, the biofuel consumption based on GHG emissions, various fuel prices, and sensitivity analysis is studied accordingly.
[107]	Outlined several candidate biofuel and FC architectures, which can supply the US's estimated transportation demand in 2050 and provided estimation on the required fund for each of them.
[108]	Described several alternative biofuels and wind energy architectures supplying the power demand. Also, computational models are developed to estimate the overall amount of each of these two alternative energies required.
[109]	Used a multi-criteria decision-making method to identify the pros and cons of different energy systems for FC electric vehicles. The social-economic analysis is also used to find the most robust options for each of the candidate systems.
3.4	Shared visions

Visions are storylines and idealistic explanations of a bioeconomy. Because of this, the bioeconomy is both favored and likely to happen. These studies are more narrative instead of being systematic and methodical. They are not supposed to estimate what will happen statistically; their salient feature is to increase the odds of obtaining the desired scenario. There is no specific planning horizon [16, 19, 63, 110].

8 There are two general sorts of visions known in the published literature. One of them, which is 9 summarized in Table 5 and explained in this section, is produced by an individual or a small team, drawing 10 an optimistic future for the biofuel era. The other one, generated using expert panels, draws a 11 foundation for a roadmapping practice, aims at creating a mutual understanding of an ideal scenario, 12 and the necessary steps to achieve that. This one is also recognized as Roadmaps and is summarized in 13 Table 7.

14 15

2

Table 5. Papers categorized as shared visions.

Paper	Summarized explanation
[61]	Explained a universal plausible scenario, based on biofuel and renewable-based methanol.
[111]	Explained a solar-biofuel scenario for the United States
[112]	Projected a consensus on biofuel usage as fuel and creates a conceivable surrogate —an artificial fluid hydrocarbon future.

[113] Envisaged the energy system in 2050 as the biofuel era, and explains the emergence and evolution of the bioeconomy.

Paper	Summarized explanation
[114]	Outlined a shared image of the biofuel era in which the biofuel is assumed as the only surrogate for non-renewable energy sources.
[43]	Showed a biofuel era, and introduces essential elements necessary for shifting to bioeconomy, such as highly efficient cars and the cooperation between stationary and mobile power.
[56]	Presented a local distributed picture for biofuel future and energy future, illustrating the global biofuel network.

In visions, more uncertain components are also incorporated to project different scenarios than business-as-usual. Usually, they represent a future in which institutional, infrastructural, and technological shifts happen along with a transition towards more environmentally friendly social principles and a more equitable society. In more extreme cases, the biofuel economy is proclaimed as an option to redistribute global power [56]. Some others even shape a shift to a biofuel economy as an unavoidable advancement of human growth [113].

8 Although some visions perceived technological changes manageable through research and 9 development, resilient government control, taxes, and demonstration plans [43, 113], others suggest a 10 requirement for more substantial changes in social principles [114], or radical technological shifts [10]. 11 Nevertheless, the details of these transitions are not explained thoroughly.

- The key up-level driving forces of the bioeconomy transition are considered as the essential social advantages, especially regarding air pollution [40, 41, 54, 115], geopolitical dominance [116], energy security [117, 118], and climate change [119-121]. Actions and policies by the government, such as financial support for tax programs [119, 122], demonstration plants [123, 124], and education [125, 126], are seen as crucial for the evolution of a biofuel economy. Furthermore, the growth of renewable energy and biofuel energy resources [126, 127] and their usage in transportation, residential, and commercial sectors are some of the other down-level driving forces [128].
- Visions share many features, and almost all of the visions view a significant shift to an energy network where biofuel is one of the chief energy sources. Transportation will be dominated by biofuels and bioelectricity rather than fossil fuels. Hence, biofuels connect sporadic renewable energy sources, making the global transition to the green economy with zero-emission. One of the main shortcomings that visions suffer from is their propensity to overlook controversial subjects (for instance, nuclear energy and carbon capture and storage) and possible restrictions related to the expansion of biofuel energy. [112] has addressed these limitations.

26 **3.5 Pathways and backcasts**

1

All the studies on pathways and backcasts start with the premise that the biofuel economy is acceptable and examines the potential routes to the biofuel future. The attention to the shift is the principal advantage of this kind of studies. Backcasting uses a prescriptive scenario planning approach as its procedure. A vision for the future is developed, and the narratives go back from that specified vision to the current time [21, 129, 130]. Notwithstanding, any specific study demonstrating a comprehensive backcasting analysis on biofuels and addressing the theoretical backcasting literature, was not found.

- 1 Almost in all backcasting-based biofuel literature, no clear image of a future biofuel economy is defined
- 2 [21, 131, 132]. However, objectives are shown, and a set of policies are recommended in several
 3 studies[128, 133].
- The average timescale of these studies is between 2020 and 2050 [21, 64, 132, 134]. Only the Californiaproject views the probable impacts of discontinuities and disruptive changes [35]. Despite the focus on transition challenges, a few studies only pay direct attention to hypothetical studies on transition in big technological systems. The majority of them depend on an everyday technology push-pull marketing strategy of technological transition. Reference [135] is an exception, which Schumacher's theory is massively informed on the multi-scenario technological changes [71, 87]. Table 6 summarizes the analysis of this category described above.
- 11

12 Table 6. The studies categorized as pathways and backcasts.

- Study Summarized explanation
 - [133] Developed measures for identifying effective commercialization; studies obstacles and risks to attain that effectiveness; presented four probable evolution scenarios based on four types of fuels, namely, gasoline, biofuel, ethanol, and methanol.
 - [21] Studied scenarios and policies; thereby, biofuel could be used in transportation.
 - [131] Introduced a vision for biofuels' future in the US and studied the key patterns which will facilitate the change towards that vision.
 - [64] Explored two different transition pathways to a biofuel future, a distributed and centralized pathway, and studies the possibilities for application in the remote and off-grid community.
 - [132] Explored two scenarios on biofuel burned cars commercialization, and assessment of different types of pathways based on well-to-wheels GHG emission.
 - [134] Studied how the infrastructure for biofuel refueling system might evolve.

13 **3.6 Roadmaping studies**

Roadmaps, similar to backcasts, consider the advantages of biofuels, describing a (normally vague)
vision, and planning a set of runs to achieve a goal. Pathways and backcasts are different from roadmaps
in how the future is seen in them, as described in the text and Table 7.

17 The majority of these studies integrate specific primary goals: (i) recognizing the obstacles faced in the 18 bio-economy evolution process and the required resources to remove these obstacles. Roadmaps aim 19 at illustrating the interactions among bio-economy future policies, strategies, and market dynamics. 20 Three studies talked about future dynamics in the market and projected some predictions too [25, 27, 21 35]; (ii) Many of them satisfy a support function. Consequently, it has been recommended that many 22 roadmaps generate extremely optimistic anticipations of a technology's future [87]; (iii) The process of 23 road-mapping looks for collecting principal stakeholders to make a common understanding of the future: a shared scenario, outlining accepted driving forces and prompts for a response to change. Whereas this 24 25 might also be a tacit feature of other sorts of scenario planning processes, it is an obvious objective of 26 many road-mapping activities.

The road-mapping method's outstanding advantage is the recognition of obstacles and ways to overcome them and the creation of mutual goals [136]. Policies and strategies are often developed for the short time scales like five to ten years, with objectives designed over the extended timescales like till 2050 and longer [25, 26, 33, 35]. Studies like these are usually controlled by fairly linear technology push/market pull attitudes [23, 26, 27].

6 7

Table 7. The studies categorized as roadmaping studies.

Study	Summarized explanation
[11]	Created the decision points and actions for the expansion of biofuel technologies
[26]	Built phases to be pursued in 2010, 2015, and 2020 to reach zero-emission transportation.
[29]	Created roadmaps that are conducting stakeholder panel exercise, drawing important goals and decision points in the evolution of a US biofuel future.
[24]	Presented a European vision for biofuel, and drew timetables and essential acts for understanding the visions
[25]	Developed goals and decision points in critical domains of biofuel use through a stakeholder panel exercise and introduces a long-term plan along with certain evaluation criteria.
[142]	Studied the dynamics of the biodiesel market, when it will be economically feasible and commercialized.
[33]	Explored how to encourage the expansion of Biofuel in the USA.

- [30] Defined the critical targets, logical and probable roadmap to achieve those targets and obstacles to commercializing the biofuel through stakeholder panel exercise.
- [23] Presented New Zealand's long-term goals for biofuel expansion.

8 4 Main takeaway points from the literature review

9 After outlining the major types of futures studies for biofuels, the literature on biofuel futures and technologies was analyzed in the next. The outcome of the analysis is grouped here around key questions 10 11 and issues found in the publications. In Section 4.1, the main driving forces of a bio-economy is identified. 12 In Section 4.2, obstacles, challenges, and difficulties of the biofuel economy are explained. In Sections 4.3 and 4.4, types of plausible and disruptive innovations facilitating bio-economy conditions are 13 14 explored. Afterward, based on sections 4.2 to 4.4, different architectures of the bio-economy are drawn. 15 Through Section 4.5 to Section 4.6, the evolution of the bio-economy is elaborated based on the 16 reviewed literature, followed by the timeline of the biofuel evolution in Section 4.8.

17 4.1 Main driving forces of a biofuel economy

18 There are different perspectives about the driving forces which will form the future of the biofuel 19 economy. Changing social values and the rise of more reliable environmental values are mentioned in almost all the visions and DS. Also, social equity appears as a driving factor, in particular, linked to the
 transition towards distributed energy production.

Most of the visions analyzed in this study, foresee present technological obstacles manageable if adequate financial support is available [43, 56, 113, 114]. Political and diplomatic decisions have a significant impact on shaping the biofuel economy according to these studies. Technological driving forces have been widely studied and seen as critical as economic, legal, and political factors[68, 111, 112, 132]. Some literature assumes that once technological feasibility is reached, the biofuel economy will evolve, whereas other studies focus on the economic aspects and the cost-effectiveness compared to conventional technologies [10, 70].

- Moreover, the *driving force*, as a term, may be used differently. Driving forces are typically defined as wider societal shifts in the DS (such as pace of technological change and social principles). In contrast, it is interpreted as government intervention and expenditure in research and development. Nevertheless,
- 13 four policy goals and overarching problems are frequently mentioned in the literature as the 14 underpinning driving forces of a shift to a biofuel future. These are:
- *Higher air quality:* Higher air quality is referred to as an important advantage of a biofuel economy [35, 70, 107];
- Energy security: This driving force includes a plethora of challenges within the limitations of fossil fuel resources, energy rates, location and geopolitical sensitivity, and vulnerability of centralized energy networks to attacks. No study concentrated particularly on this perspective, and 18 studies out of the 171 did not touch upon this driver. Studies which emphasized this driver [29, 30, 39, 57, 113, 143] were mainly roadmaps or visions;
- Affordability: Four studies referred to the affordability of the different types of biofuel energy as a key
 driving force through transitioning to the bio-economy [29, 42, 132, 144];
- *Climate change:* Mitigating GHG emissions is the main driving force in many of the published literature.
 It is seen as the leading cause of shifting the bio-economy. Many projects are conducted to mitigate
- 26 GHGs using biofuels under the United Nations' clean development mechanisms [145-149]. There is a
- strong connection between climate change and biofuel energy sources, explained in Part 4.9 thoroughly.
 A relatively controversial driving force mentioned is the possible noise pollution-reducing effect of
- 29 biofuels in cities [44].
 - In general, biofuel is carbon-neutral [17], i.e., its GHG release is re-absorbed by the plants over time. However, the time required for compensating the emissions can be hugely dependent on the type of carbon sink [31]. For example, unsustainable use of forests could reduce the carbon sink values of trees and soil [150, 151]. Some studies show how biofuel production from forests can result in 40% more GHGs than fossil fuel [32, 152, 153].
 - 35 When biofuel is a part of a traditional forest product chain [31], the CO₂-parity payback time is several
 - 36 decades or even higher, but could be considerably shorter when also using forest residues [15]. Yan [154]
 - 37 found that forest use increases GHG emission in the short run while it results in GHG mitigation in the
 - 38 long run.
 - Some authors suggest diversifying the biomass supply to conserve the forests. For example, Van
 Meerbeek et al. investigated biomass supply from gardens, roadsides, conservation areas, and sports

fields instead of croplands and forests [55, 65]. Souza et al. explored different fossil fuel and bioenergy
 futures and studied alternative crops analyzing the forecasts, obstacles, and food security [58].

Also, some studies proposed new regions to harvest. For example, Hamelin et al. developed a method to evaluate the European countries' biofuel potential based on four main resources, namely, forestry, farming, municipal, and food waste residues [15]. Some studies have also discussed the balance of food security, forest conversation, and biofuel development [49]. Besides these driving forces that facilitate the evolution of the biofuel economy, there are obstacles, challenges, and difficulties that hinder this

8 evolution.

9 4.2 Obstacles, challenges, and difficulties

Based on the literature, a wide range of obstacles were identified that could hamper the emergence of a biofuel economy. The most notable ones are the following: (i) The lack of refueling infrastructure [122]; (ii) Expensive zero-emission biofuel generation [34, 155]; (iii) Technology incompleteness of some types of biofuel-based vehicles, in particular onboard storage and short lifetime of fuel cells [134]. Some other challenges are unique for some biofuel scenarios and are discussed in Part 5.3 under the projected changing technological structures for bio-economy.

16 One of the most referred restrictions is social acceptance [11, 53, 118] and a lack of regulations [156, 17 157]. Numerous restrictions are extracted from several studies. For instance, social values which dismiss 18 the environment [11]; inadequate skills basis [11]; the capability of necessary technologies to adjust to 19 competition with biofuel [158]; lack of social acceptance [11, 53, 118, 159]; uncertainties around 20 expenses of carbon sequestration [160]; lack of demand for biofuel products [161]; the current fossil 21 fuel-based regulative structure [52]; the lack of surplus energy from renewables [162]; lack of 22 international collaboration or action plans [163]; problem in reaching financial assets for technological 23 developers [53, 164] are some of these limitations. These challenges, obstacles, and difficulties, along 24 with the driving forces, shape different futures necessary for biofuel development.

25 **4.3** Type of futures vital to biofuel development

The most consistent future studies type is DS. Based on these future studies, biofuels would become important in future systems in which the economy grows fast, accompanied by prompt technological growth [20, 28, 42, 86, 88, 105]. Such conditions can be envisaged when environmental concerns, particularly climate change, get important, or when conventional energy sources become vulnerable or costly [39, 53].

When the focus is on the business and profits, and the environmental and social factors are ignored, the consequences of climate change may be undermined, leading to modest technological growth. However, the same outcome may result from a bioeconomy perspective of economic growth, losing its pace. However, biofuels' emergence may be inconsistent with the above in regions without notable oil and gas supplies, thus also linking the bioeconomy to the local economy. In either of these cases, disruptive technologies and innovations would have a crucial role in the biofuel future.

1 4.4 Importance of disruptive innovations on the biofuel future

Biofuels were found to develop gradually in business-as-usual scenarios [20, 42, 53, 88, 132]. Only in the
presence of rigorous support from governments, fast diffusion of biofuels was found to take place (even
though the support alone is not considered adequate for the rapid spread) [53, 88], or massive
disruptions (e.g., changes in social principles) [53, 60, 86], technological inventions which dramatically
decrease expenses [20], increasing oil price [88] or expanding climate consciousness [165].

7 4.5 The bio-economy architecture

8 Motives, obstacles, and issues presented in the previous sections form different frames for imaginable 9 biofuel economies, including various configurations, technological projections, and diverse perceptions 10 about the definition of biofuel economy. Two types of technological topologies emerge in the studies: 11 centralized or decentralized, as explained in the next sections and illustrated in Figures 2-3.

12 4.5.1 Decentralized configuration

Decentralized systems focus on regional biofuel production [166], covering the whole biofuel process from feedstock handling to pyrolysis processes and co-gasification [51, 167-169]. Several studies envision biofuel production from regional or local energy resources (e.g., small-scale biomass conversion, or micro-renewables) [64, 166, 167, 170-174]. In contrast, other authors have considered biofuel production more centralized [175-179], transporting it further to consumers either as electricity [180] or bio-ethanol [45, 46, 181-187]. Decentralized biofuel production would overcome several infrastructural obstacles confronting biofuels [188, 189].

Studies, especially on road transport [21, 30], consider on-site biofuel generation as a transitional stage to a biofuel economy. Other studies consider decentralization a crucial aspect of the biofuel economy, which yields tangible benefits in dispersed production, household refueling, and even energy democratization [56]. Decentralization with biofuels may also provide synergies between electricity, heat, and transportation sectors, e,g, selling electricity to the grid at peak demand times [42, 43, 86, 113].



26



1 4.5.2 Centralized configurations

Centralized systems can utilize a broader range of energy sources than distributed systems (e.g., coal gasification would be incompatible with distributed systems). However, they will rely on the expansion of a devoted biofuel supply setup. Many studies concentrated on the biofuel use in road transportation [175-179] and foresee regional biofuel storage and pipe networks connecting initial demonstration projects and automobile refueling stations [190, 191], thus building biofuel vessels where the demand is high. A schematic of the centralized configuration is illustrated in Figure 3.

8 Another different configuration that can evolve is the Shell alternative futures configuration. It foresees 9 biofuel traded in a container as a fuel package. If this breakthrough happens, it will change the existing 10 energy distribution mechanism entirely [28]. To be more comprehensive, most of the published 11 literature believe in a combination of decentralized and centralized configurations, with fuelling stations 12 where the demand is high, and with both of these configurations throughout the energy market equally 13 [173, 192-195]. The pros and cons of decentralized and centralized configurations are summarized in

14 Table 8.



15

16 Figure 3. Schematic configuration of a centralized biofuel production system.

17 Table 8. Pros and cons of centralized and decentralized biofuel production systems

Biofuel production systems	Pros	Cons
Centralized	 Broder range of energy sources Suitable for road transportation Automobile refueling stations Suitable when the demand is high Low finished product price Low maintenance cost 	 Rely on the expansion of a devoted biofuel supply setup High establishment and investment cost Not suitable for air and water transportation

Decentralized	 Provides synergies between electricity, heat, and transportation sectors 	High maintenance costHigh finished product cost
	 Provides synchronization ability to the electricity grid and selling electricity to the grid at peak demand times 	
	griu at peak demand times	
	 Low establishment cost 	

1 4.6 Development of a biofuel economy

As stated previously, the majority of the published literature has a positive perspective on a biofuel
economy. Several development trends could be identified:

4 Most of the studies perceive the distributed system architecture crucial for overcoming the 5 infrastructure challenge with bioeconomy [64, 166, 167, 170-174]. Still, some studies [29, 175-179] 6 perceived centralized generation necessary as the first step connecting demonstration projects and 7 building biofuel corridors or highways fuelled with industrially generated biofuels. Based on the 8 evaluated literature, the timeline of the development of the biofuel economy can be derived. A well-9 defined timeline of the biofuel evolution can help policymakers and practitioners to be prepared for 10 different phases of the bio-economy development process, which is explained in the next section.

11 **4.7** Timeline of a biofuel economy

12 Six of the studies analyzed the biofuel economy's impact on GHG emission reduction [39, 50, 53, 86, 106, 13 132, 196]. It is concluded in these studies that biofuels, and specifically fuel cell cars 2020-2025, can have 14 a crucial impact in decreasing the GHGs. Nevertheless, several studies [50, 106, 132] concluded that a 15 shift to biofuels could occur, not before 2030–2050, and that shifting to a biofuel-based road 16 transportation network earlier could raise overall GHG by displacing the higher GHG reductions from 17 bio-electricity. Figure 4 draws crude timelines and intensities of the transition to biofuel-based 18 transportation found in the studies. The pathways depicted are instead perceived as possibilities of 19 bioeconomy futures than targets. The schedule of the transition to a biofuel based transportation system 20 can be mainly divided into three stages, including introduction, growth, and maturity, which are described in the next. 21

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21 Figure 4. Timelines of the transition to a biofuel based transportation system in different studies.

22 4.7.1 Introduction to the market

1 2

23 Some of the studies such as [20, 24, 39, 53, 86, 93, 124] framed the evolution of the biofuels focusing on the market entry in the short term (by 2020) and long term (by 2050). The main assumptions of this 24 25 group of studies are linked to introducing biofuels and fuel cells. These studies also assumed that any 26 new technology introduction will progress gradually and cannot be forced in an untimely manner. 27 Therefore, a market introduction plan must be arranged over a longer time horizon in order to build the 28 right framework circumstances which permit then the market to develop without extra incentives [55]. 29 These studies assume that the market introduction phase should be in force for long enough and be 30 financially supported. During this early stage of technology adoption, the optimal allocation of resources 31 will be important, which will require constant screening of biofuel technology successes and failures, 32 and updating regulation. Thus, various kinds of performance indicators, along with well-designed 33 deployment planning [20, 124], government leadership [53, 86], and enforcement of specific market 34 goals of biofuels in transportation [39, 93] are vital factors for a successful market introduction. Besides 1 public support [20, 53, 124], private and public collaboration are needed to improve fuel distribution

2 [39, 86, 93]. After introducing the market, increasing the market share in the next phase of the evolution

3 of the bio-economy.

4 4.7.2 Increasing the market share

Some of the studies [37, 49, 60, 135, 183] have focused on the growth of biofuels' market uptake. The main factors affecting the growth of the market after the entry phase include energy and climate policies [37, 183], technology development in industries [49, 183], oil price [37, 135], perceived biofuel potential [60, 135, 183]. The specific features of this stage are that the models used to describe the market penetration stretch over long time horizons during which many of the above-stated factors (may also change. For example, the emission limitations or penalties could depend on the rate of biofuel use [49], or an increasing climate ambition could increase the overall biofuel potential [183].

12 The uptake of biofuels in the transportation sector and stationary energy systems will also depend on 13 how competing technologies will develop. For instance, assuming increasing non-biofuel-based zero-14 emission energies (e.g., nuclear energy) and techniques (e.g., carbon capture and storage) [49, 183], 15 would indicate decreasing biofuel's share in power production [60, 135, 183], which in turn could leave 16 more production for transportation [37, 49, 60, 135, 183]. On the other hand, turning into electricity-17 based transportation would cut the biofuels [49, 183]. The differences in assumptions and uncertainties 18 in input data lead to a broad range in the future share of biofuels, from 0–10% [37, 49, 135] to above 19 40% [60, 183]; However, the majority of the studies indicates moderate biofuel demand (10-40%) [37, 20 49, 60, 183].

Although biofuels will not take over the transportation industry, most of the publications anticipate a considerable surge in the consummation of biofuels [37, 49]. Furthermore, zero-emission transportation modes, including electric and hybrid cars, are considered as inevitable alternatives in all the scenarios [37, 49, 60, 135, 183].

25 The majority of the studies perceived the biofuel economy to be fuelled in the end by renewable energy 26 sources, with power and biofuel as the principal and substitutable energy carriers [10, 20, 52, 68, 113, 27 124]. There is, however, some controversy about the evolutionary path of biofuels [91]. While there is a 28 strong consensus that the biofuel economy would start with vehicles being fueled with biofuels at 29 gasoline stations and this would then spread out to the whole road transportation [26, 90, 114], there is 30 controversy about what types of biofuel vehicles would first penetrate the market [45, 57, 113, 187]. 31 Small-sized passenger vehicles seem to be preferred to reduce the weight and decrease the power and 32 storage prerequisites of biofuels [43, 109, 128]. Other authors claim that heavy-duty vehicles are more 33 suitable initial adopters because the weight and space prerequisites are less severe, particularly for 34 shipping cases [61, 190]. Another matter of controversy is the sequence of introduction of biofuels, and 35 which type will be introduced first and take a higher share in the market [59, 70, 133, 138] and biofuel 36 is considered as one of the important alternatives which will be dominating the future energy markets 37 in these scenarios.

1 4.7.3 Dominating the market

The third group of the studies is more focused on market dominance biofuels in transportation. In these studies, the consumption of different biofuels, including ethanol, biodiesel, and methanol increases gradually. The share of biofuels could increase to 35% by 2020 in road transportation and up to 70% by 2050 [90, 197-200]. Some of the underlying assumptions require strong public support such as guaranteed biofuel prices [42], tax releases [93], or guaranteed purchase of biofuel byproducts [14].

7 The fourth group of studies [21, 28, 47, 50, 90, 100, 130] considers all three stages framing a biofuel-8 based transportation system's evolution based on the suggested timeline. Typical assumptions in this 9 group are related to the cost-effectiveness of each energy carrier under different carbon policies in the 10 transportation industry [21, 50, 130], mitigation scenarios in climate policies [47, 90], and electricity 11 production modes [28, 100]. The arrows in Figure 4, the dash type arrow, shows the biofuel development 12 process as a product life cycle. Policymakers are eager to find product-market fit, the inflection point in 13 which the product takes off, and experiences hockey-stick growth (the transition from phase one to 14 phase two in Figure 4). However, just as important is the stagnation point or the point later in the S-15 curve when a product experiences growth stagnation (the transition from phase two to phase three). Many policymakers do not think about these stagnation points. However, it is necessary to pay attention 16 17 to these because they determine how big the product can become. In order to proper utilization of 18 biofuels, a set of policies is recommended in the next section.

19 5 Closing remarks

20 5.1 Futures studies in biofuel

Based on the published literature for biofuels' future, a set of complex models, descriptive narrative
methods, trend analysis, rhetorical debates, and long-range plans can be identified.

23 One might think that how studies of 20 years ago would still be relevant or what the difference between 24 the findings of those studies and the current paper is. In the context of foresight and futures studies, 25 planning horizon varies from 20 to 50 years. Therefore, although more recent studies have been 26 considered more in the current review, studies in this time horizon have not been ignored. In this review, 27 we critically evaluated different perspectives used as the key points in these future-oriented studies. 28 Thus, the lessons learned from these studies are the assumptions that have been used in their 29 projections; critical uncertainties and driving forces that have been identified by them to shape the 30 future of the biofuels; limitation, difficulties, challenges, and opportunities which have been identified 31 by these studies; different scenarios, visions, roadmaps, and pathways developed and proposed by these 32 studies. Critical evaluation of these key findings created an alternative for a collective thinking process 33 (or participatory study) and provided insights for the researchers, practitioners, and policymakers in 34 biofuel-based energy, transportation, and industrial systems.

Participatory approaches are barely used, with the exemption of many roadmaps, and some descriptive analyses. None of the backcast models showed a theoretically grounded backcasting process. Only four

out of the 171 studies elaborating biofuel futures showed any reference to relevant literature on

38 technological transition.

Six types of pathways for realizing the future of biofuel energy and technologies could be identified in the foresight studies, namely: (i) The forecasts treated biofuels as a product, which struggles in a huge generic marketplace without specific context; (ii) The descriptive scenarios showed biofuels as a

4 possibility among others when more substantial changes take place in society; (iii) The statistical

- 5 scenarios explained different biofuel configurations; (iv) The visions narrated shared image of the bio-
- 6 economy, where biofuel will play a vital role in mitigating substantial societal challenges such as climate
- 7 change; (v) The backcasts created a backward systematic and prescriptive long-term plan to achieve the
- 8 desired end and investigated possible pathways to that point; (vi) The roadmaps considered biofuels as
- 9 an answer to particular challenges, and therefore, as the main policy objective.

10 **5.2** Limitations in forecasting biofuel futures

- Some limitations in the biofuel futures studies were identified as follows: The overall shortcoming of model results to some of the mutual futures drawbacks recognized by [12]: determinism with the novel technologies. Moreover, many studies, which have a shortcoming in the hypothetical foundation, design the impacts of technology policies in their representation of a biofuel shift, posing a hypothesis on the impacts of biofuel dissemination strategies.
- The number of experts in the process of futures studies for the biofuel future was often low, which
 also imposes concerns on the transparency of the process.
- 18 The roadmaps developed are not distinct and clear about the assumptions to create a vision.
- In forecasts and visions, genuine analytical treatment with uncertainties were often missing.
 However, instead, previous studies were reused as the basis for specific viewpoints about the future
 (e.g., California's biomass development roadmap was based on the goals of New Zealand's biofuels
 roadmap).
- Top-down approaches focusing on international and regional driving forces were often employed
 overlooking local problems and specific regions' opportunities.
- Several studies analyzed the bio-economy's more extensive sustainability effects.
- Most of the studies treated the potential growth in biofuels in an isolated context, e.g., overlooking
 the wider systems transition needed for the envisioned biofuel futures.
- Several explanatory futures seemed to be biased in the drawbacks of biofuels were treated more or
 less as technological challenges.
- Outgoing from the above limitations and findings of the literature review, more scientific and theoretical studies, in which the energy, transportation, and sustainability aspects along with technological and social dynamics of the biofuel transition are directly addressed, should be considered. Nevertheless, such critical evaluations must be balanced against the fact that many of the studies will encourage visionary assessment and could, therefore, generate distinct futures instead of reducing the choices using partial information.
- Social and technical changes and technological transitions have not been studied in detail in several biofuel futures studies, but this must be balanced against the limited predictive utility of existing theoretical methods used.

1 5.3 Lessons learned from the biofuel futures studies

2 The published literature shows various ideas on plausible biofuel futures, demonstrating that there are 3 several options for a biofuel economy, but also indicating that pure technological perceptions will not 4 be adequate to describe a sustainable biofuel economy. More explicitly, the analysis results of Section 4 5 suggest common understandings in certain domains as follows: (i) Four main policy motives will influence 6 the biofuels futures namely energy security, climate change, air pollution, and recognized competitive 7 advantages of emerging biofuel technologies; (ii) three main obstacles in front of a biofuel economy are 8 also evident: costs, lack of technical knowledge, and infrastructure; (iii) In scenarios which are an 9 extension of the current trends, biofuel develops gradually and in some cases even not at all. In the 10 published literature, biofuels will rapidly evolve only if governments act seriously when facing security 11 threats, climate change or drastic social or technological transition happen; (iv) Researchers and 12 policymakers have no consensus on the precise definition of a biofuel economy; (v) Regardless how a 13 biofuel economy will develop and grow, a set of important notches are recognized as playing vital roles 14 in a change such as broadly differing opinions on the possible dates of market entry for the biofuel cars; 15 (vi) With respect to GHG emissions, major uncertainty exists about the effects of a biofuel economy in 16 short to medium run.

As a final concluding comment, it is noteworthy to observe that mutual visions and anticipations about the future can also turn into driving forces that direct and constrain research by creating a secure environment for novel ideas to develop. This will compensate for the investments and current modest performance of these ideas with their anticipated forthcoming benefits [2, 18, 201]. This unclearness in defining the *biofuel economy* is indeed its oratorical strength since visions with a higher flexibility of interpretation are more able to outgo other likely projections of the future [158].

23 5.4 Policy recommendations

24 Three key policy perspectives of the bioeconomy can be identified based on the development process 25 and timeline provided described in Sections 4.6 and 4.7: Environmental sustainability is the primary 26 driver for the future bio-economy emphasizing sustainability-based policy routes for the bioeconomy 27 such as those in Section 4.7. In this context, some studies suggest creating global environmental 28 awareness based on academic projections [114, 118, 150, 165], some others suggest more specific 29 measures such as (i) civic training programs [125, 126], (ii) enhanced research and development [26, 35, 30 163], (iii) tax tariffs for cars and incentives for biofuels [132], and (iv) improving the infrastructure [107, 31 109, 134, 188, 189]. The policy recommendations also include mandates or goals for zero-emission cars 32 [50, 69, 121, 192], standards and codes [156], support to encourage confidence in biofuel investments 33 [116], development of biofuel industry and governmental support [35, 122], funding for sustainable and 34 renewable energies [163], sound transition plans to increase confidence and decrease uncertainty [38, 35 153, 161, 176], and enhance skills base in biofuels [88, 170, 183] explained in Section 4.7. According to 36 the reviewed literature, these policies would be necessary for increasing the market share within the 37 environmental sustainability perspective (Section 4.7.2 and 4.7.3).

The second perspective is the market dominanace of biofuels, where the main driver would be technological breakthroughs to make bio-economy cost-effective in the energy and transportation markets (Sections 4.7.2 and 4.7.3). The policy recommendations include an inherent dilemma between lock-in and winner-picking. Namely, in a winner-picking policy identifying the best technology
beforehand is very risky and questionable, and could lead to a policy failure [26, 156]. On the other hand,
an incremental policy approach in which winners are not chosen by creating an objective-oriented policy

- 4 structure (e.g., incentives for zero-carbon cars) could lead to a lock-in to present technological pathways
- 5 preventing more disruptive pathways for a bioeconomy [50, 69, 121, 192].

6 The third perspective is to protect the investments on biofuel development driven by economic and 7 supply-side energy security (Section 4.7.3). Accordingly, the dominance of biofuels in the market would 8 depend on a continuous, robust and sustainable supply chain. The studies suggest hybrid centralized and 9 decentralized supply chains. Infrastructures with large biomass flows will enjoy economy-of-scale 10 benefits, which may well compensate for the higher transportation costs to the distribution sites. Mostly, 11 centralized architecture is more environmentally friendly in small regions, while decentralization is 12 becoming a more sustainable option with increasing area [202-204]. Based on our findings, case-specific

13 decentralization scheme should be implemented due to different optimal decentralization level

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