CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The following are the researcher’s conclusions:

GSCM reduces production costs for the firms since it helps the firms to manage resources and suppliers optimally. Being a measure that enhances ROI without much investment upfront, firms should necessarily be into GSCM. This not only translates into improved benefits for stakeholders like shareholders but also for other stakeholder categories, the government included. The energy conserved owing to adherence to GSCM, the pollution curtailed, again thanks to GSCM, etc will benefit the local community and the village / town the firm operates from, apart from benefiting the government. The latter can reduce energy imports and reduce its investment in pollution control measures. Production of hazardous substances can also be minimised, courtesy GSCM. Hazardous substances released as by-products during manufacturing operations in particular can be greatly minimised if GSCM is adhered to. Presently the release of such by-products during the manufacture of relatively non-polluting or harmless products poses a great threat to the environment. Even the regulator is finding it difficult to track all the offending manufacturers since they come in all shapes and all sizes in every nook and cranny of the country. Given that India is a huge geography, resource constraints render it impossible for the regulator to identify and act upon all the manufacturing units that spew hazardous substances into the atmosphere. Hence the government should mandate green practices in all the sectors.
5.2 Suggestions

- Courtesy GSCM, firms can take up recycling and reusing raw materials aggressively thereby reducing production costs. At the same time, firms can ensure that they achieve pollution mitigation. This is a win-win situation for all since on the one hand the firms get to improve their bottom lines and on the other, they contribute their mite to environment preservation.

- A firm that is into green practices, can hope to mobilise more business by publicising the fact that its products are environment-friendly and thus promote the environment. Hence firms must go green.

- Adherence to green practices help firms cater to a niche and environment-conscious market thereby acquiring a competitive edge over its rivals at the market place. Hence firms must go green.

- Adherence to green practices also help firms raise their brand equity which in turn is bound to improve their market value. In fact, by using the green practices route, firms can enhance their market value in the most assured and most cost-effective manner. Hence firms must go green.

- Green practices help firms exploit their resources optimally thereby leading to enhanced productivity. Thus, even as they reduce their investment in raw materials, the firms can reduce their operational costs and gain a competitive edge over their rivals in the marketplace. This also helps the country conserve its scarce but precious resources. Hence firms must go green.

- Even more importantly, green practices help the firms adhere to environmental regulations in letter and spirit. They can minimise or even eliminate the likelihood of violating the environmental regulations thereby insulating themselves from fines, penalties, etc. Additionally, the firm’s reputation will not be dented through word-of-mouth or through bad press. Hence firms must go green.
Green practices also help the firms achieve waste reduction. This represents savings not only at the level of the firms but also at the national and international levels. Waste reduction raises productivity more cost-effectively compared to other dedicated productivity-enhancing measures. Hence firms must go green.

Green practices also help in reducing the outflow of effluent volumes from factories. Thus green practices effectively reduce the investment in effluent treatment measures. This helps the firms to stay ahead of the rivals in the marketplace on the quality front and the price front as well. Hence firms must go green.

It is true that there is a shortage of skilled HR professionals in sustainability and GSCM. It is time the government took note of this fact and entrusted the task of churning out HR professionals trained in this field to the apex body of the HR profession. The researcher strongly recommends that the government act on this issue forthwith.

Global sourcing is also making it difficult to trace carbon footprint. Hence the government should find a way out of this imbroglio. Several advancements have been made in this exercise in the advanced countries and the government will do well to benefit from such advancements. It is going to cost the government some money but it will be worth it all the same.

Government should mandate internal sustainability audit on the part of the firm. Otherwise firms may go green in letter rather than in spirit.

Inadequate tools to optimise the supply chain with environmental management is a formidable barrier to GSCM. Here too, the initiative should be taken by the government. Firms cannot ensure adequate tools owing to resource constraints, knowhow constraints etc. The government should necessarily chip in.

Suppliers too are not totally enthusiastic about the implementation of green practices. Nor are the clients in a position to force them to become green.
practices-compliant for obvious reasons. In the circumstances, it is only a regulatory mandate that can do the trick. The researcher strongly recommends that the regulator mandate the supplier to follow green practices.

- Customers are ignorant of the significance of GSCM products and services. Hence the government should create awareness in the public at large about the significance of GSCM products and services by tying up with the industry bodies of all sectors.

- The regulator has to create a new class of professionals or GSCM practitioners who can be of help to firms in their pursuit of green practices. The practitioners can convince the firms to their satisfaction that going green does not require additional investment or involve additional expenses on their part. It will take some convincing since the well-entrenched mind-set cannot be changed overnight.

- The regulator should also mandate that firms ensure that green practices-compliant sourcing policies are embedded internally or at the company level. A suitably recast procurement policy towards this end will ensure that the suppliers behave.

- A task force comprised of representatives of firms and core suppliers should be mandated to be constituted. The task force should design innovative green products and innovative green materials. The task force should also periodically ensure that advanced technology is being exploited by the suppliers as well as the firms to enable them go greener.
5.3 Scope for Future Research

This is restricted to SME’s belongs to only five sectors in Bangalore and not considering large scales industries there is a scope for further studies in this area.

There is an urgent need to introduce green supply chain management in as many sectors as possible. However, GSCM-proficient practitioners are not available in adequate numbers for the purpose. Hence the researcher suggests that a study be undertaken to recommend to the regulator how to go about the task of creating a new class of professionals, to be called GSCM practitioners.