**Promising evolution of fourth generation biofuels**

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**Abstract**

Microalgal biofuel has encouraging prospects for a sustainable economy. It has attained considerable quantity of heed all around the globe from researchers and academicians. They are a replacement to the fast depleting fossil fuels. Fourth generation biofuel mainly focusses on genetically modified algae and cyanobacteria biomass. It is found that fourth generation biofuel is compatible with engines and transport services. Biomass yield and oil content of the algal strains are considered to be the most prominent factors related to cost in the production of fourth generation biofuel. In this regard, genetic engineering is the requisite for boosting the biomass yield and oil accumulation of the genetically modified strains of algae. Suitable mitigation strategies are crucial to overcome the concerns related to them, for the successful commercialized production of the fourth-generation biofuel. Because of the prospects of enhancing the biomass productivity by improving its quality and minimizing the production price, genetic engineering applications are flourishing in the area of biofuels.

**Keywords**: Algae; Biofuel; Biomass; Fourth generation; Genetic modification.

**CONTENT:**

**1. Introduction**

Biofuels are utilized to fabricate various fuels such as bioethanol, biodiesel, biobutanol, biomethane, biohydrogen, vegetable oil, gasoline, isoprene and jet fuel (Bajracharya et al., 2017). Biofuels are categorized in four various generations viz. first, second, third, and fourth generation biofuels based on the raw materials and manufacturing technique.

First generation biofuels are created from sugar and starch crops such as maize, sugarcane etc., and oil-based plants. However, functionality of the first generation biofuels has been interrogated progressively because of the matters regarding the battle for feedstock and arable lands. To address these matters, second generation biofuels have been launched as they make use of non food crops. Second generation biofuel also make use of forestry and agricultural residues.But the manufacture of second generation biofuel would be unsustainable if battle for accessible land were to emerge. Third generation biofuels fabricated from algae, have gathered huge awareness because of their elevated yield, assimilation of carbon dioxide (CO2), and comparatively simple processing. Algae can be cultured in different waters such as wastewater, brackish water and seawater, and also in uncultivable drylands and marginal farmlands. Hence, they do not fight with food crops on arable land or in freshwater ecosystem. The fourth generation biofuel (FGB) is fabricated from genetically modified (GM) algal feedstocks to attain improved biofuel manufacture. Enhancing photosynthetic efficacy, enhancing penetration of light, and minimizing photoinhibition are few general approaches employed in the microalgal genetic engineering (Tandon and Jin 2017). The metabolic modification of microalgae is crucial enhancement of carbohydrate or lipid content. Maximization of carbohydrate and lipid are amidst the most attractive parameters that can enhance the efficiency of the yield of a microalgae biomass.

The manipulation of GM microalgae needs a stringent evaluation of the concerned risks and the feasible management of the impacts of the ecosystem (Beacham et al., 2017). The GM microalgae cultivation could be executed in both controlled and uncontrolled systems. However, the limitations of these methods are crucially separate from one another. The controlled system of cultivation has a more tightly contained state, while exposure to environment and contamination are reduced. In spite of providing more security, the operating cost of the controlled system of cultivation is immense. Uncontrolled system of cultivation are commonly raceway ponds. Uncontrolled system of cultivation has lower capital costs than controlled system of cultivation, but the probability for the GM algal strains to be diffused from these cultivation systems is immense, as uncontrolled system of cultivation are vulnerable to aerosol dispersal, interference of birds or animal, and leakage (Hannon et al., 2010). Other issues, such as environmental diffusion and safety of users, have made FGB to persist within research boundaries.

The first person to use the expression “fourth generation of biofuel” to describe the fuel attained from GM algal species was Barrett in 2009. The proposed approach utilized synthetic biology to create microbes with unusually elevated levels of CO2 absorbance attributes. Large-scale manufacture of FGB is yet not feasible because of the risks relating to health and ecosystem, legitimacy issues, inadequate manufacture of biomass, and elevated production price (Shokravi et al., 2021). Many algal species viz *Chlorella* sp., *Phaeodactylum tricornutum*, *Nannochloropsis* sp., *Isochrysis galbana* displays increased lipid, protein and carbohydrate content (Kumar et al., 2017). Still, few limitations do prevail with microalgae-based biofuels such as contaminations at the time of cultivation, harvesting problems and difficult downstream processing (Mehmood, 2019). Latest evolutions in genetic modification and molecular biology tools and techniques have permitted the discovery and assessment of novel biochemical pathways in different model algae strains and have also furnished an effective and specific method to edit genomes in order to generate new strains for optimal fabrication of biofuel (Jgadevan et al., 2018). Besides, with the aid of computational biology techniques and tools such as next-generation sequencing (NGS), genome-scale metabolic reconstruction, multiomic databases can swiftly aid in the identification of new pathways or target for development of new strains, in turn saving time and capital expenses (Banerjee et al., 2016). The amalgamation of genetic engineering, molecular biology and interdisciplinary physicochemical strategies to optimize and improve the yield of production of biofuel could be broadly inferred as: Fourth generation of Biofuels (FGB). FGB uses genetically engineered algal strains that cumulate excess lipid and carbohydrate content to maximize biofuel yield. There are several routes that can be exploited to generate the FGB such as- using systems and computational biology-based strategies for metabolic engineering, genetic manipulation of photosynthetic microbes for elevated biofuel yield, and the onging technology improvement of photobioreactors to optimize organism growth and biofuel production (Godbole et al., 2021).

**2. Biofuel Generations**

Biofuels are categorized in four various classes relating to their biomass raw material (Dutta et al., 2014).

*First generation biofuel*

First-generation biofuels use edible feedstock such as starch (from corn, potato, barley and wheat) and sugar corps (from sugarcane and sugar beet). However, issues emerged regarding utilizing edible crops as biomass and the influences on croplands, food supply chain and biodiversity (Alalwan et al., 2019). These biofuels are also considered as ‘conventional biofuels’.

*Second generation biofuel*

The biomass here is lignocellulosic substances that comprises of the inexpensive and abundant nonedible raw materials obtained from plants (Trabelsi et al., 2018). A huge range of discarded substances could be employed as biofuel biomass such as agricultural waste, willow and eucalyptus, poplar trees, switchgrass, miscanthus, reed canary grass, and wood residues and they mostly comprise of plant cell walls, whose primary compound is polysaccharides (LeBauer et al., 2018). Non-food crops like Jatropha was also utilized. These polysaccharides have an excessive sugar content which is favoured for biofuel fabrication. The biomass is also known as lignocellulosic as it is obtained from cellulose, and hemicellulose and lignin.

*Third generation biofuel*

Microalgae have various significant characteristics including high oil content, needing less space for its growth, the capability to cultivate in both artificial and natural and artificial habitats, and being environmentally safe (Yi-Feng and Wu, 2011). Also, due to its higher quality, microalgal oil is recommended over lignocellulose-based oil. The third-generation biofuels are procured from microalgae through transesterification or hydrotreatment of the algal oil.

*Fourth generation biofuel*

Research on fourth generation biofuel has been implemented amid 2000 and 2020 (Vignesh et al., 2021). The fourth-generation biofuels are fabricated utilising genetically modified (GM) algal strains, photobiological solar fuels and electro-fuels (Sharma et al., 2019). The GM algal feedstock is efficient in fabricating biofuels via enhancing photosynthetic efficacy, and maximising penetration of light. The fourth-generation solar fuel raw biomass are extensively obtainable, cost effective and inexhaustible. Genome editing tools and techniques including transcription-like effectornucleases (TALEN), zinc-finger nuclease (ZFN), and clustered regularly interspaced palindromic sequences (CRISPR/Cas9), extensively utilised as the bioinformatics tools (Maeda et al., 2018; Mahapatra et al., 2021).

Presently, various strategies have been embraced- engineering of pathways in indigenous producers (optimizing cultivation rates, directing the metabolic flux toward creation of biofuel, use of various carbon sources, and elevated production titers) and reformation of pathways recognized in innate producers in more genetically attainable host organisms. A huge range of microbes could be utilized as model for the manufacture of biofuels, including bacteria, cyanobacteria, fungi, yeast, and algae (both macroalgae and microalgae). The commonly used model organism is however microalgae. Proper containment approaches are however required to minimize the diffusion risk of GMO into the environment. CRIPSR/Cas9 is a commonly employed tool for genetic engineering, as it provides a simple layout with effective transfection and targeted gene disruption. Another option to targeted genetic manipulation is random mutagenesis, which is nothing but as accelerated evolution. A newer experimental appeal to FGB is electrobiofuels production. These techniques are based on new-to-nature hybrid system thereby utilising renewable electricity and carbon sources to create biofuels hereby converting the solar energy into storable liquid fuel. Such type of strategies can merge the higher photon efficiency of modern photovoltaic systems (compared to photosynthesis) with the sustainability of biofuel fabrication, enhancing potency of the overall process (Cavelius et al., 2023).

In summation to genetic manipulation, few other fourth-generation technologies include pyrolysis (temperature range between 400 to 600 °C), gasification, and solar-to-fuel, pathways. However, these technologies are still in early progression phases (Sikarwar et al., 2017). Fig. 1 shows the different types of FGB.



**Fig 1.** Different types of Fourth generation biofuels. (Source: Malode SJ et al., 2022)

**3. Environmental impact of biofuels**

Various genetic alteration methods have been launched to improve algal feedstock. These improvement approaches are primely built on the target genes for the direct biosynthesis of biofuels, carbohydrate and lipid metabolism, enhanced nutrient utilization efficiency, hydrogen manufacture, enhanced photosynthesis efficiency, improved cell disintegration, higher stress resistance and bioflocculation. These processes can notably enhance the fabrication of algal biofuels. Improvement of productivity and lipid accumulation is the simplest technique to minimize the cost, consumption of nutrients and water footprint. Genome editing techniques are broadly employed for enhancement of the productivity and lipid yield of microalgae. Three types of genome editing tools- zinc-finger nuclease (ZFN), transcription activator-like effector nucleases (TALEN), and clustered regularly interspaced palindromic sequences(CRISPR/Cas9) are widely employed (Maeda et al., 2018). The first genome editing investigation in microalgae was documented on *Chlamydomonas reinhardtii* utilizing ZFN (Sizova et al., 2017).

The applied genetic manipulation strategies for biofuel improvement may comprises of (1) altering the sequence of an available functional gene, (2) altering an existing regulatory sequence, or (3) reinstating a regulatory gene or sequence with one from another or organism or strains (Henley et al., 2017). The microalgae developed from the first two strategies (1 and 2) are free from any foreign DNA material and could be excused from the legislation of GMO (genetically modified organism) materials (Glass 2003; Bergeson et al., 2014).

*Health and environmental concerns*

Genetically modified (GM) microalgae can conquer effortlessly the surroundings because of their tiny size, swift growth, and vast number. The prime ecosystem issues concerning the uncontained manipulation of GM algae concerns to battle between the introduced microalgae and native species, alterations in natural terrain, horizontal gene transfer, and toxicity. Liberating toxic algal isolates into the surroundings can strike grave risks to humankinds’ health.

Lateral or horizontal gene transfer is stated as a technique by which the genetic material of one strain is transmitted to other in a non-genealogical way (Goldenfeld and Woese, 2007). The term ‘genetic modification’ is employed to address genetic manipulation strategies that are enforced to add, delete, or alter particular chunk of a strain’s genome. Therefore, natural replication approaches like random mutagenesis, could be excused from regulations of GMO.

For the sustainability and marketing of FGB manufacture, the outdoor cultivation of GM microalgae is significant. However, before initiating the GM algae into the surroundings, risk assessments should be executed to diminish the potential ecological and safety concerns regarding with the liberation of GM characteristics from cultivation, harvesting, and processing provisions.

The ecological and health-related risks related with unanticipated or intentional diffusion of GM algal isolates and envisioning suitable mitigation approaches have a direct effect on the biofuel manufacture economy. The idea of genetic modification in algal strains is to enhance the quality and yield of FGB. Nevertheless, removal of GM algal species remained a crucial hindrance. The release of chromosomal or plasmid DNA might create horizontal gene transfer in microbes. Therefore, firm regulations are thrusted to stop the diffusion of GM products. Plasmid or chromosomal DNA in microbes stays active even after their demise. OPR systems are the most vulnerable to contamination by wind, insects and birds. Administering secure genetic modification methods, such as self-cloning and mutagenesis, may increase the sustainability and bio economics of FGB manufacture. Apart from utilising safe genetic manipulation, other mitigation approaches such as intrinsic biocontainment, and physical and chemical deposition techniques are utilized to demolish the microbes and the genetic element present in GM materials.

*Safe genetic engineering techniques*

The biosafety regulation is built to terminate the unintentional diffusion of engineered species to the ecosystem and interruption of the biotic balance in the environment. Safe genetic manipulation strategies utilized for genetic engineering of algae species like mutagenesis and self-cloning do not hold foreign DNA sequences in their genome (Sharon-Gojman et al., 2017). Therefore, these mechanisms are eliminated from the biosafety regulation synthesis. Utilising a safe genetic modification approach is a reliable measure to increase the sustainability of FGB without risking biosafety-critical standards.

*Biocontainment of genetic materials*

Biocontainment is one of the most effective measures to mitigate the risk conferred by the diffusion of genetically altered microbes into the surrounding (Wang and Zhang, 2019). The major concern in the biocontainment of genetic material is to protect the cell genetic material from diffusing into the ecosystem even after cell demise. Biocontainment can be attained by various approaches such as auxotrophic system, toxin-antitoxin pair, toxin-based system and xenobiological components-based techniques (Wang and Zhang, 2019).

**4. Strategies and Methods for the production of fourth generation biofuels**

*Genome editing*

Alteration of the genes associated in triacylglycerol (TAG) and fatty acid biosynthesis pathways is a significant strategy to maximize the microalgal lipid content. Genetic alteration techniques such as overexpression of genes linked to TAG and FASs or obstructing competing pathways are chief regulators for increasing microalgal lipid storage (Wase et al., 2018). Microalgae is a sustainable origin of high-value chemicals such as carbohydrate, lipid and protein which is contemplated a renewable and environmentally friendly option for fossil fuel. Although each microalgal strain has a specific growth rate and doubling time. Algal feedstock cultivation for biofuel has many marginal benefits such as CO2 sequestration while being adept to be utilized as the biomass for manufacturing an extensive array of biofuels such as diesel, gasoline, biodiesel and bioethanol (Shokravi et al., 2019).

*Genetic engineering*

Genetic manipulation has been demonstrated as a pivotal technique in algae species development for improved biofuel manufacture. In the past decade, comprehensive attempts have led to the progression of genetically modified algal species for lipid creation. Few of the most regularly genetically engineered algal strains are *Chlamydomonas reinhardtii*, *Phaeodactylum tricornutum*, *Synechocystis* sp. PCC 6803, and several *Chlorella* species. For the fabrication of genetically engineered organisms, several enzymes and metabolic pathways could be aimed. Nuclear transformation is a popularly employed method for the alteration of metabolic pathways. Nuclear transformation needs the utilization of algae cells deficient in cell wall for the random infusion of transgenes into the genome of the organism. Rochaix and Dillewijn attained the foremost occurrence of nuclear transformation in *Chlamydomonas reinhardtii* by using polyethylene glycol. It is challenging to anticipate the stability of the transgene as genetic mutations, the movement of transposable elements and gene silencing, these procedures are controlled by various molecular techniques (Godbole et al., 2021).

*CRISPR technology for microalgal genome editing*

Zinc Finger Nucleases (ZFN), RNA interference (RNAi) and Transcription factor-like effector nucleases (TALENs) were regularly employed earlier for genome editing in microalgal strains. Since the discovery of the clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats/associated protein 9 (CRISPR/Cas9) system in 2013, because of its cost effectiveness, adaptability, simple usage and to aim several genes at the same time, it has developed into the gold standard for genetic engineering (Jeon et al., 2017). The Cas9 protein gives rise to double-stranded breaks in the gene aimed by the synthetic guide RNA (sgRNA), in turn silencing the aimed gene. The foremost successful utilization of CRISPR/Cas9 for algae genome editing in the model strain *Chlamydomonas reinhardtii* was reported by Jiang et al., 2014. But because of the toxicity of Cas9, the mutation rate was comparatively little. Shin et al., used a different strategy, Cas9-sgRNA ribonucleoprotein (RNP) to overcome this hindrance (Shin et al., 2016). Efficient gene editing was attained by utilizing an optimized CRISPR/Cas9 vector in *Phaeodactylum tricornutum*. *Nannochloropsis* spp. has been tagged as a model strain for carbon sequestration and oil production after successful genome editing by CRISPR/Cas9 (Wang et al., 2016).

**5. Socioeconomic analysis**

The balance amidst social and economic factors is extremely vital for generation of a sustainable system. The triumph of a commercialized commodity could be affected negatively if an imbalance amidst these two factors arise, and subsequently it can lead to a crucial loss of market value. Therefore, socio-economic factors should be evaluated before a product is released into the market. Profitability, social acceptability and well-being, and resource conservation, are the prime socioeconomic factors concerned to the FGB fabrication.

*Profitability*

The details on techno-economic inspection could be utilized to investigate and equate the price and advantages of various projects, techniques, or provisions. Data gathered from techno-economic inspection could be utilized to access if production goals are being attained, identification of substantial contributors to the price (Slade and Bauen, 2013), and investigate the economic suitability of upscaling.

*Social acceptability*

For an energy approach to be triumphant, it must strike equilibrium amidst the competitive interests of economic advancement and environment well being. The swift-growing industry of GM materials has ignited substantial resistance from public since its launch in 1994. The information on the harm to mankind and environment created by GM organisms must be obtainable by the people, as a way of dealing with concerns about the social acceptability of FGB. This will enhance public’s realization on the advantages and disadvantages concerned with GM feedstock.

*Social well-being*

Probable occupational damages particular to the FGB feedstock cultivation can be categorized into four classes- antibiotic resistance, carcinogens, allergies, and pathogenicity or toxicity. Engineered cells are revealed to antibiotics to shield them from foreign DNA at the time of introduction. As the cells persist to show the antibiotic-resistant gene, the antibiotics may transmit to other strains or into foodstuff ingested by mankind. Bacterial resistance might maximize because these series of occurrences. Carcinogenic materials particular to algae may develop the generation of cancerous tissue in an individual’s body. GM strains could act as allergens themselves or create allergenic compounds (Menetrez, 2012). Statistics shows that in 2004 and 2005 several farmers in India who came in contact with Bt cotton, experienced allergic symptoms. Besides, GM strains might initiate or enhance the existence of toxins or pathogens that might damage human health (Snow and Smith, 2012).

*Risk of catastrophe*

The feedstock creation of FGB can create a catastrophe through its intended and unintended diffusion into the neighbouring land and water bodies. Probable catastrophe hazards concerned with the diffusion of GM algal strains can be categorized into four types- alterations in the innate ecosystem of preserved strains, battle with the indigenous strains, toxicity, and horizontal gene transmission (Hewett et al., 2016).

*Cultivation systems*

Photobioreactors (PBR) and open raceway ponds (ORP) are two dominant cultivation systems used in commercialization of microalgae feedstock manufacture. Confined cultivation systems provide optimal control and diminish the risk of contamination; however, they are extremely expensive. GM algae can improve the quality and yield of biofuel, ensuing in the commercial sustainability of manufacture of FGB. PBR demonstrated inflated productivity and photosynthesis efficacy and hence, had less production value. However, the investment price of PBR are more than of ORP. Wind and leakage were the prime components accountable for transmitting the algal strains from the ORP cultivation system. Various control alternatives should be contemplated when constructing ponds for cultivating GM algal strains to minimize spreading risk. Employing lining to prevent leakage and utilizing air-supported plastic hoop greenhouses are few of the control measures that have been taken to minimize this hazard (Abdullah et al., 2019).

 *Water supplies and recycling*

Water footprint (WF) is evaluated by estimating the variety of pollution and the polluted water proportion. Minimizing the WF in the manufacturing procedure is the foremost objective of a biofuel system’s sustainability (Quiroz, 2021). Wu et al. (2012) were the first to propose a life cycle water assessment framework utilizing a standardized WF technique to investigate green water, blue water, and agricultural grey water discharge in the fabrication of biofuel biomass. Green and blue WF are respectively the consumed volumes of rainwater and groundwater utilized. Grey WF is determined by quantifying the freshwater needed to dilute polluted water into the freshwater quality standard. The vital factors in the WF of the biofuel production are- biomass utilized for biofuel (Holmatov et al., 2019), the energy extraction procedure, and the final product, which is biofuel (Amundson, 2016). The residue from the culture medium of of GM algal feedstock cultivation could strike crucial risks to health and ecosystem. Hence, definite remediation should be undertaken before the diffusion of wastewater into the neighbouring environment. Freshwater consumption can be minimized from recycling and reusing discharged wastewater effluents from the harvesting stage. Hence, nutrient-recycling this discharged wastewater can improve the economic efficacy by reducing material input. Utilizing wastewater as a replacement of freshwater is an optimistic approach to cultivate microalgal strains because of to its elevated levels of nutrients. Employing wastewater to cultivate algal strains could make the creation of FGB suitable and viable.

*Diffusion Risk*

Diffusing pathogenic microalgal strains into the ecosystem can have adverse societal consequences and shatter the welfare of humankind and flora and fauna. Horizontal gene transmission is the system through which components from one strain to another are transmitted in a non-genealogical way. Wind was cited as the main invador of the genes into the ecosystem. The transfer of DNA amidst organisms of several species by horizontal gene exchange is one of the prominent issues concerned to embrace GM feedstock for the production of FGB. Hence, the remnants attained from the energy extraction technique and the water diffused from the harvesting of GM feedstock should be discarded attentively. Doing so would avert horizontal gene exchange by transferring chromosomal DNA or transgenic plasmid.

**6. Regulations and Mitigation strategies related to the fourth generation biofuels**

Restricted number of studies and assessments are present on the large-scale outdoor cultivation of GM microalgae and its influence on the ecosystem. A significant limitation halting the administration of largescale trials is the rigid laws and regulations enforced by authorities (Hamilton et al., 2015). Most of the commercially fabricated microalgal strains are grown in outdoor open-pond process.The improvement of lipid content in GM algal strains by administering the suitable cultivation conditions could crucially impact the potentiality of biofuel production. Even though employing an outdoor pond is the best choice for algal cultivation, it is not without limitations. Mutant breakout can strike a severe menace to the biodiversity of a local surrounding, potentially maximizing the risk of an algal bloom formation. The infringement of a wild variety of microalgal strain into a cultivation pond could affect its productivity (Russo et al., 2017). De Mooij et al., 2016 simulated an outdoor mass culture of engineered *Chlorella sorokiniana* algae to access the battle amid the mutant and wild types. The mutants were quickly overgrown, ensuing into productivity loss, in a surrounding contaminated with the wild variety. Aravanis et al. (Kuiken et al., 2014) launched an end-to-end algal biofuel manufacture technique utilized a genetically engineered organism *Chlamydomonas reinhardtii*. Szyjka et al., 2017 accessed the environmental threat of the open pond cultivation of genetically modified algal strain. The finding displays that outdoor cultivation did not develop any detrimental consequences on the surrounding native algal population or the ecosystem. The utilization of the genetic or allied biological manipulation of microalgae is extensively recommended for the sustainability of FGB creation. However, for the large scale open-pond cultivation of the GM microalgae to be viable, it is required to be economically feasible. Another hindrance in manufacturing FGB concerns to the removal of remnants that generates from this energy-extraction process.

Genetic manipulation targets to increase the algal biofuel manufacture. The phenomenon of microbes remains active even after their demise. This mechanism might cause plasmid or chromosomal DNA diffusion into the environment. The unintended or deliberate diffusion of DNA at certain concentrations could develop in horizontal gene transfer by transformation; therefore, there are firm laws and rules for the removal of these substances.

Waste disposal methods are targeted at diminishing the consequences of ecosystem related to GM remnants and at the substitution of hazardous by-products with increased environmental-friendly options. Various approaches could be enforced to minimize waste residues (e.g., waste separation and concentration, energy/material recovery, waste reduction, incineration/treatment, waste exchange, and secure land disposal). Composting is one of the most dependable alternatives for the safe removal of these residues (Singh et al., 2006). Two categories of composting are commonly utilized for the degeneration of GMO isolates- enclosed bioreactor systems and open turned windrow systems. Utilizing an enclosed bioreactor is suggested as it has a remarkably quick composting time while making sure that the substances are composted in an optimal manner (Epstein, 2017). Recycling the residues of algae feedstock after its carbohydrate, lipid, and protein content processing is a widespread result for eradicating issues concerning the horizontal gene transfer (Heilmann et al., 2013). Ueda et al., 1996 recommended flaming the biofuel extraction process dried residues to regain energy and CO2. Hence, the recommended technique has three benefits- decline in waste, the recovery of energy, and the recovery and reuse of CO2. After the processing stage, the solid residues withdrawn from recycling the culture medium can be employed as a secondary origin of nutrients in cultivation systems (Moller et al., 2012).

Thermal treatment is a notably employed technique for the degeneration of DNA in GMOs. Hrnčírová et al., 2008 evaluated the consequences of thermal degeneration on the amount of the DNA extracted. The outcomes demonstrated that maximizing the temperature crucially minimize the content of DNA in a time-dependent way in GMOs. The consequences of thermal processing on transgenic and non-transgenic DNA was investigated by Bergerová et al., 2010. The magnitude of the matrices of the DNA extracted was found to be a vital criterion in DNA degeneration.

Consumption of water throughout the FGB production is another problem that requires to be handled to ensure the sustainable utilization of biodiversity and resources. Harvesting is the most significant stage in the biofuel manufacture procedure. There are two foremost potential options concerning the WF (water footprint) of algal biofuel: (1) culture with recycling and (2) culture with the residue of the harvested water. Recycling the diffused water from the harvesting stage can minimize the water quantity absorbed throughout biofuel manufacture by up to 90.2% (Feng et al., 2016).

**7. Future Prospects and Conclusion**

Algal biofuel is an encouraging option for fossil fuel beholden to its benefits such as high energy content, less discharge, and non-polluting nature. However, manufacture of the algal biofuel is not economically feasible due to the less yield and high manufacturing price. Utilizing open-pond cultivation is the required step for success in industrial-scale FGB fabrication.

The future of GM algae biofuel relies on enhancing the competence of its growth, improving the strains of algae that is being used, and encouraging the industrialization of production of biomass. These developments can be attained by minimizing the price and enhancing the yield of cultivation systems as well as by initiating increased coherent genetic modification or allied strategies to maximize the output and quality of the products. However, the commercial production of GM algae is currently hindered by the risks associated with the intended and unintentional release of the genetically modified isolates into the ecosystem. The facets regarding legislation matters and environmental risks associated with the manufacture of GM algal feedstocks are two significant issues that requires more advanced recognition. Vital concerns in this field comprises the risk of the entrance of GMO species into the natural ecosystem, the big capital expenditures needed, and the excessive operational price of the photobioreactors. Such cons restrict the commercial utilization of FGB. Hence, studies need to be conducted to overcome these limitations and moving forwards toward the commercialized sustainable fabrication of FGB. Maximum productivity could be attained by enhancing reactor designs, using high-throughput genetic modification techniques, and constructive waste management. The future is optimistic for FGB, and genetic modification is a required element for an effectual transformation from fossil fuels to biofuel as the prime energy origin in the 21st century and beyond.

For the cultivation of algal feedstock, Open-pond is the most favourable choice for microalagal biomass production as they are the most economical large scale bio reactors. However, executing an open-pond reactor cultivation system without conducting a comprehensive risk evaluation of the procedure can lead to a consequential menace not only to the ecosystem but also to mankind. Preventive methods should be contemplated throughout the design and production procedures to minimize the risk of diffusion via horizontal gene transfer generated by releasing chromosomal DNA or plasmid into environment. The evolution and implementation of feasible and cautious genetic engineering strategies which do not require foreign DNA are anticipated to minimize biosafety issues, thereby making genetic engineering approaches more admissible to the public and policymakers.

Residue discarding is another vital concern which needed to be regarded in manufacture of FGB and suitable mitigation approaches should be employed to lessen the risk of environmental and health problems. Disposal techniques that eliminate the microbes and the genetic element are the most fruitful alternatives to diminish the lateral gene transfer risk. The cultivation media utilized to make biomass culture can be recycled back into the process and reused up to four times. The residual water from the harvesting process of the FGB creation carries genetic elements and required to be treated with care. The treatment procedure should be done parallelly with the nutrient recycling to ensure that resources are sustainably utilized. The bioeconomics of the FGB could be remarkably enhanced by genetic manipulation approaches for improving biomass yield and lipid accumulation. However, employing an open pond could maximize the risk of diffusion of manipulated species into the environment through wind or animals. Utilizing plastic hoop air-aided greenhouse enveloping is recommended as a control initiative to arrest the discharge of the GM strains in the surroundings. The economic execution of FGB manufacture could be enhanced by recycling water and nutrients, and reusing released residue. Apart from the incurred prices, socioeconomic drivers prevail among the most crucial factors in market valuation and commercialization of GM algal feedstock.

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