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Sommario/riassunto	The 20th century has seen a phenomenal growth in the global economy and continuous improvement in the standard of living in the industrialized countries. Sustainable development has become an ideal target in recent years and in the early 1990s the concept of ""Green chemistry"" was launched in the USA as a new paradigm, and since 1993 it has been promoted by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The success of the pharmaceutical industry is, in large part, due to the towering achievement of organic chemistry, a mature science which emerged as a di