

24th LCA Discussion Forum: Life Cycle Approaches for Sustainable Consumption

December 2, 2004, Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Switzerland

Room BC 03

How to consume in a more sustainable way?

We are pleased to invite you to the 24th Discussion Forum on Life Cycle Assessment to address this question.

Sustainable consumption is an emerging issue in many countries. At present consumers are flooded with pieces of information on how to consume in a sustainable way and not seldomly the information seems contradictory. There is a need for reliable assessments of all consumption activities and there is also a need to prioritise consumption patterns and alternatives that can make a significant difference.

Life cycle thinking is a powerful concept that spreads out more and more in domains where sustainability is of importance. To look at individual phases in the life cycle of goods and services is reductive; we need to consider all impacts from the production throughout the use and the end of life stage. Life-cycle approaches could probably provide the scientific basis for all dimensions of sustainable consumption. They gave already proof of their usefulness in studies to evaluate environmental and economical aspects of sustainable consumption.

The 24th LCA discussion forum aims at determining and illustrating how life cycle approaches can be used in the area of sustainable consumption, e.g. to inform policy makers, select areas of action, identify consumption patterns and lifestyles that are more sustainable, advise consumers, and evaluate the effectiveness of measures.

In particular the 24th LCA Forum will look at:

- Available life cycle tools for sustainable consumption;
- Life cycle approaches that allow assessing a majority of consumption activities;
- Consumer acceptance of more sustainable products and consumption patterns;
- Life cycle approaches allowing evaluating problems that could be caused by changes in consumption patterns (rebounds effects);
- Case studies on sustainable consumption using life cycle approaches;

Presentations and discussions will address and give tentative answers to the following questions:

- What is the potential of sustainable consumption for impact reductions?
- How to measure sustainability (state of nature, social and economical performance)? What are acceptable levels of damages and time horizons for sustainable consumption?
- How to promote sustainable consumption (financial incentives, legislative actions, etc.)?

We hope that this forum will be of interest to you and we are looking forward to welcoming you in Lausanne.

Information on the LCA Discussion Forums can be found on the following website:
<http://www.texma.org/LCA-Forum/lca-forum.html>

For the Industrial Ecology – Life Cycle Systems group,

Best regards.

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Life Cycle Approaches for Sustainable Consumption

2nd of December, Swiss Institute of Technology, Lausanne, BC 03

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09h00	Registration, coffee
09h30	Welcome and motivation Olivier Jolliet, EPFL
09h45	Environmental decision-making in sustainable consumption: Assessment of key decisions and case studies Josef Kaenzig, EPFL
10h15	About consumer's difficulties in evaluating environmental products Carmen Tanner, University of Zürich
10h45	Break, coffee
11h00	The responsibility of Coop in promoting sustainable consumption Sybil Anwander, Coop
11h30	Development of benchmarks for the LCA-based environmental information on consumer products, services and consumption patterns, Ari Nissinen, Finnish Environment Institute Sustainable consumption via new product formats Tony Taylor, Unilever
12h00	Questions and group discussion
12h30	Lunch (not included)
14h00	The use of life cycle assessment in the European integrated product policy Yannick Le Guern, Bio Intelligence Service
14h30	Towards sustainable consumption: lessons from the projects EIPRO and SusProNet, and implications for the Sustainable Consumption Research Exchange network. Arnold Tukker, TNO
15h00	Happiness – the functional unit of sustainable consumption? Patrick Hofstetter, Büro für Analyse und Ökologie
15h30	Break, coffee
15h45	Environmental impact of household consumption Katarina Korytarova, IIASA and University of Amsterdam Time as a functional unit in comparative life cycle assessment of immaterial and material consumption systems Kristian Juric, University of Vienna
16h15	Questions and group discussion
16h45	Feedback to the plenum
16h50	Announcements
16h55	Farewell