LCA AS TRANS-INTERDISCIPLINARY TOOL: A CHALLENGE FOR UNDERSTANDING AND COMMUNICATION

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Worldwide context

Major global challenges of today

Source = S. Valdivia
European context

- Increasing demand from consumers

31% des consommateurs souhaitent acheter un produit en fonction de la performance environnementale

16.6% 2 ans plus tôt (2004).

Source: ADEME / ETHICITY
Belgian context

- A political focus

“Vers une information environnementale pour le consommateur sur les produits de consommation”
9h00 à 14h00, jeudi, 22 janvier 2009
Bruxelles - Belgique
Belgian context

- In Walloon region
  - From Greenwin cluster
    - Greenskills = LCA formation
  - Circular economy = priority of Wallonia
  - AWAC
Belgian context

- Among others:
  - From Greenwin cluster
    - In regional projects ➔ Work Package LCA = mandatory
  - In European projects
    - WP LCA mandatory ➔ to prove the improvement comparing the counterparts
LCA in projects through years

- Only the final product
  - A final number
  - No comparison with existing products

- From ecodesign until final product
  - To improve continuously
  - To discriminate scenarios
  - To compare with existing products
LCA in projects

- In theory:
  - Inclusion of LCA from the beginning
    - Participation of meetings with partners
    - Communication
    - Use of simplified tools
    - TRANSMISSION OF INFORMATION
LCA in projects

- In reality:
The relevance of LCA

- Trying to explain the relevance
  - Yes it is mandatory **BUT**

L’écoconception, source d’innovation dans l’approche cycle de vie; l’expérience du Québec, Guy Belletête, Congrès ACV, Lilles, 4/11/2011
The relevance of LCA

- First step
  - To demystify
  - To show the relevance
  - To show the potential uses
To understand each other

- Need of data
  - First approach
  - Black box is ok
  - A template to fill is provided
To understand each other

- Explaining results
  - For LCA practitioner
To understand each other

- Explaining results
  - For partners

Comparing 1 p Enzyme catalyzed with 1 p Alkali catalyzed;
Method: Eco-indicator 99 (E) V2.07/Europe EI 99 E/E/ Characterisation
To understand each other

- Illustrate important steps

Focusing on STEP B

How to improve it?
To implicate all partners

- Brainstorming
- New perspective
- Destroying preconceptions
- Quantifying in terms of environment clues (already) identified
To answer doubts

- **YES** you can get several numbers because:
  - the absolute result depends on assumptions
  - the absolute result depends on databases
  - the absolute result depends on methods
  - ...

![Image of mathematical symbols and numbers]
To answer doubts

**BUT**

- The goal is not to get an **ABSOLUTE NUMBER**!

- The goal is
  - To improve the product
  - To highlight importance of steps
  - To make the best choices in terms of environment

LCA can HELP to achieve these goals
Conclusions

- From our experience, to succeed in LCA, we NEED
  - The awareness of partners
  - To talk a common language
  - To understand fears of industrials
  - To show the usefulness of LCA
  - The collaboration of industrials
Conclusions

- Yes, LCA is mandatory in projects but also
  - The wearing of the seat belts
  - Not smoking in public places
  - Going to school
  - …

Not to annoy you but to try to improve our society…
Thanks for your attention! Any question?

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