




UNEP/ SETAC Life Cycle Initiative




Towards Global Guidance for Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) Databases
 - First draft outline of global guidance document



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Outline: Chapters


1. Introduction (including governing principles)
case studies on challenges
1. Guiding principles for databases (including relevant terms)
2. Goal and Scope Definition focusing on Life Cycle Inventories (LCIs)
3. Data collection
4. Modelling principles for Life Cycle Inventories
5. Data quality and consistency
6. Documentation and Reporting
7. Review and maintenance of the datasets
8. Limitations and user advice


Outline: Sections

1. Introduction
 1. Goal/ Vision statement
 2. Expectations
 3. Governing principles of the process
2. Guiding principles for databases
3. Goal and Scope Definition focusing on LCIs
 1. Application dependency
 2. Functional unit and product system
 3. System boundaries and scope
4. Data Collection (and Selection)
5. Modelling principles for Life Cycle Inventories


Major modelling issues

 1. Secondary modelling issues
 2. Special cases for modelling
6. Data quality and consistency
 1. Specifying data quality
 2. Managing data quality
 3. Data consistency
7. Documentation and Reporting
8. Review and maintenance of the datasets
9. Limitations and user advice


Specific challenges (organisational)

TAKE THE ELEMENTS OUT THAT NOT RELEVANT FOR DATABASES/ also ISSUES WHERE MORE GUIDANCE IS NEEDED

- License conditions and ownerships
- Lack of communication about uncertainties
- Lack of transparency/ What does it mean?
- Confidentiality
- Definition of common nomenclature for elementary flows
- Claims of representativeness
- Conflict resolution mechanism for misrepresentation
- Protection from invalid studies and claims
- Verification
- Understanding review statements
- Updates of databases/ Communication of changes in results
- Interchangeability of data between databases
- Maintenance


Specific challenges (technical)

- Missing data and meta data
- Lack of communication about uncertainties
- Unit versus systems data
- Definition of common nomenclature for elementary flows
- Understanding of data quality
- Guidance on geographic and technical representativeness
- Allocation in general and on Recycling in particular
- Treatment of biogenic emissions
- Ability to identify best available data
- Concept of qualitative data/ linked to social LCA
- Application dependent modelling
- Attributional/ consequential LCA
- Input/ Output data
- Completeness (cut-offs)
- Modification of datasets to own requirements
- Linking life cycle inventories to impact assessment/ spatial and temporal differentiation
- Verification
- Understanding review statements
- Future technology scenarios and Future waste scenarios


For more information:

Secretariat

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