

Sustainable Products Purchasers Coalition

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In 2003, with the collaboration and support of some of the world's foremost Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) experts in the review and recommendation process of an environmental product indicator, the Sustainable Products Purchasers Coalition (SPPC) created the Eco-Profile of the Sustainable Product Declaration Sheet. All manufacturers that have LCAs completed according to ISO 14040 standards and use the Eco-Profile impact categories can report their results so that they can be in the selection of products. In conjunction with the Eco-Profile, the SPPC developed a draft list of indicators of social and economic sustainability that is the first step towards providing manufacturers with a clear and simple method of reporting social and economic performance. The Social and Economic Indicators documents combine the common elements of the leading social and economic reporting tools that currently exist. The Social Indicators document is now in peer review, the Economic Indicators document is in the draft stage.

The SPPC has made great strides toward developing an industry standard for the dissemination of the environmental performance and impact of products. Indeed, the Eco-Profile is already represented on the website of a manufacturer in the building materials industry. We further anticipate the 15 manufacturers in this industry sector with whom we are working to incorporate the Eco-Profile with more than 70 products. Our efforts have been a great success, and we are well positioned and eager to accelerate the development of the SPPC.

The next most vital task for the SPPC is website expansion for the development of the SPPC Member's Forum, a web-based arena for SPPC members to discuss sustainable products with other members. The members' forum will be a place where members can share their experience with environmentally preferable purchasing. They can share their interpretations of LCA results or discuss materials for which there is no LCA data yet available. They can share methods and also post any relevant purchasing policy language or other materials to assist one another. They will have access to premium information about manufacturers that have provided comparable LCA data and provide links to that information as well providing a place to review on-line discussions about sustainable products.

We believe that through these developments and future SPPC plans, the purchasing community will be better able to make informed decisions about the environmental, social and economic impacts of the products they choose to purchase. The Eco-Profile and Web Forum will help inform the manufacturing industry about the impacts of their products and help them to understand the environmental attributes purchasers are seeking in their products.

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