

Sustainability Assessment using LCA Tools

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Panelists: Gregory A. Norris (Harvard/Sylvatica), Marry Ann Curran (US EPA), Reinout Heijungs (Leiden University), Sangwon Suh (University of Minnesota)

Session Abstract: LCA approaches as have developed and ripened in the last decades are part of the broader field of sustainability assessment often connected to different disciplines. They consist of models and tools of varied nature and complexity. ISO-LCA with its simplifications has been the driving power for LCA diffusion, but it has limitations regarding spatial/temporal aspects and economic/social parameters. To increase the efficacy of sustainability decision making, LCA is to take into account broader externalities, broader interrelations and different application/user needs. The panel discussion is expected to provide perspectives on the applications of LCA tools for sustainability assessment. The goal of the panel discussion is to share the views on the position and the role of LCA in the field of sustainability assessment. The panelists are invited from both the government and the academia of Europe and the North America. Topics to be discussed will include:

- The role of LCA for sustainability assessment
- Cases where LCA is used for sustainability assessment
- Strengths and weaknesses of LCA as a tool for sustainability assessment
- Social and economic aspects in LCA
- Recent initiatives on LCA tools for sustainability assessment by the European Commission
- Future research directions and needs areas in the broader domain of LCA for sustainability assessment