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**Policy of the American Center for Life Cycle Assessment
Relative to Life Cycle Standards, Legislation and Policy**

The American Center for Life Cycle Assessment (ACLCA) is a non-profit membership organization whose mission is to build capacity and knowledge of life cycle assessment. In support of this mission, ACLCA may comment on and potentially intervene in processes of standardization, legislation and policy relevant to Life Cycle Assessment. This document outlines the policy positions of the organization on which any such comments or interventions may rely.

- Life Cycle Assessment is a very powerful environmental decision-making tool. It is the best available tool to provide a comprehensive assessment of alternative scenarios for a broad range of environmental issues. Failure to consider life cycle implications of decisions leads to unintended and likely undesirable environmental outcomes.
- ACLCA supports the broad application of LCA
 - in governmental and business policy applications;
 - as a basis for environmental education;
 - as a basis for environmentally preferable purchasing and ecolabels;
 - to support carbon footprinting;
 - to support design-for-environment and product stewardship;
 - and many other applications
- ACLCA recognizes that life cycle studies are not appropriate for all decision-making situations, but that life cycle thinking has a very broad application. ACLCA supports the broad use of life cycle thinking in everyday decision-making.
- ACLCA supports natural science as the basis of life cycle assessment. It promotes the advancement of life cycle science and the incorporation of the best available science in life cycle studies.
- ACLCA recognizes that any life cycle study can only measure the environmental impacts which are understood. ACLCA supports basic research in environmental science.
- ACLCA recognizes that the methodologies for environmental impact assessment are evolving and that endpoint assessments, by definition, rely on value judgments.
- ACLCA supports the continuing development of impact assessment methods and the quantification of their uncertainty, and, where possible, the reduction of reliance on value judgment.
- ACLCA recognizes that the choice of allocation method, particularly in the area of recycling, can drive behavior. ACLCA supports the development of new allocation methodologies that move toward more sustainable behavior from all interested parties. Until such a method exists, ACLCA supports the use of sensitivity analysis on the allocation method.
- ACLCA recognizes the public concern with green house gas emissions and their possible impacts on the planet. It is the position of ACLCA that green house gas emission calculations or “carbon

accounting” is a subset of LCA and should be performed using the same guidelines and standards as any other life cycle assessment. ACLCA supports the assessment of green house gas emissions in conjunction with other impact categories.

- LCA is by its nature an international activity, reflecting the reality of the global economy. ACLCA strongly supports harmonization of international LCA systems.
- ACLCA supports the application of international standards on life cycle assessment, as embodied in the ISO 14040 series standards.
- ACLCA supports transparency and consensus in the development of life cycle standards and scoping processes.
- Although the outputs of an LCA study are easy to understand and use, the performance of LCA studies is a highly technical process and should be undertaken by trained professionals. ACLCA supports the certification of LCA professionals through its own programs and through comparable programs.
- ACLCA supports education in life cycle assessment at all ages and in all segments of the population, including both the benefits of using LCA and the limitations of the methodology.
- LCA depends strongly on data availability. ACLCA supports the disclosure of LCI data taking into account needs of business to retain confidentiality. ACLCA supports strong standards for life cycle data quality and data quality assessment.
- ACLCA supports the use and development of the US Life Cycle Inventory Database