

Assessing social impacts in the product life cycle

Time of the workshop

26 November 2012, 17:15-19:00

Chairs of the workshop

Chair: Arne Wangel, DTU, Denmark

Co-chair: Kossara Kisheva, DTU, Denmark

Introduction and goal of workshop

Since the publication of the UNEP-SETAC Guidelines on Social LCA 2009, a number of important contributions have been made to elaborate this proposed methodological framework and to explore its feasibility in several case studies. Reviews of this literature point to several challenges when applying the methodological steps of Environmental LCA to social impacts. Recent contributions transgress the LCA community and relate e.g. to concepts and measurement of human well-being and global value chain analysis. More fundamental questions are raised on the objective and validity when capturing social impacts throughout the phases of the product life cycle.

The objective of the workshop is to critically review current efforts and to define an updated research agenda for assessing social impacts in the product life cycle.

Workshop programme

- 1 A review of recent literature on Social LCA contributions presented by members of the Social LCA group at DTU Management Engineering, Division on Quantitative Sustainability Assessment. The review follows up on discussion points which have been raised in previous reviews by e.g. *Kloepffer 2008* and *Jorgensen et al. 2008*.

The discussion of the review is expected to address – among others – these questions:

- Which are the relevant and significant social impacts in the life cycle of products and services?
- Are social impacts adequately conceptualized as one out of three pillars of sustainability?
- How do the prospects for a Social LCA methodology compare with existing schemes of social impact assessment in supply chain management?

- 2 Selected paper presenters from the Symposium session on social dimensions of sustainability will be invited to elaborate key points to further stimulate the discussion.

- 3 As an output, the workshop will - with a view to the research agenda presented in the UNEP-SETAC Guidelines for Social LCA 2009 – seek to identify priorities for research for the coming five years as well as of options for research cooperation and networking.

Practicalities

The workshop will be recorded on video, which will be uploaded to the symposium homepage. There will be 1-2 rapporteurs to give feedback to symposium plenum session for a discussion there. Furthermore, a small writing team will be established and given the task for writing up a short memo reflecting the main conclusions of the workshop. The memo will be published in a relevant journal.

Contact info

If you are interested in participating in the workshop, please contact Arne Wangel (arwa@dtu.dk).