

LCA experiences in APEC countries

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LCA experiences in APEC countries

- Little experience in LCA carried out on products produced in APEC countries
- LCA of cooking with LPG and kerosene in India for German Agency for Technical Co-operation
- LCI of lithium production in Chile
- LCI for crude oil exploration in Nigeria
- LCA of cotton and orange juice for WWF
- Co-organisation of the 2003 *International Conference on Ecobalance and LCA* in Mumbai, India
- Tutoring of (Swiss) students work on an LCA of sugar cane industry in South America

Experiences with LCA investigation of companies in APEC countries

- Product systems of goods and services purchased in Western Europe often include manufacturing in Asian countries or materials from Africa (crude oil) or South America (e.g. Lithium)
=> LCI data investigation often involves APEC countries
- Large cultural differences in public access to environmental information and in response to foreign requests
- International experiences facilitate data acquisition
- Sector specific differences according to public awareness
- Incentive for these countries to participate in Western LCA studies? → public pressure, request by customers, awareness of responsible persons

Do APEC countries need LCA ?

- Environmental problems are sometimes obvious, such as smog in cities due to private traffic, capacity of sewage or waste management systems not (yet) sufficient, ship wrecking in India
- Not enough means for solving these problems
- Improvements on the spot (basic environmental infrastructure for sewage and waste, manufacturing plants, operation of cars) are (currently) probably most effective
- Need for life cycle perspective to discover „hidden“ improvement potentials ?

Threats and Opportunities

- International requirements to provide LCA information with a product can be perceived as a trade barrier against product imports from foreign countries (WTO)

BUT

- Environmental performance of products may also be perceived as a chance:
Example Brazil:
energy supply relies on sources perceived as environmentally friendly (hydro power, ethanol)

Make opportunities come true

APEC countries may profit from participating in foreign LCA studies and performing LCAs on their own:

- Processes with relevant contribution to environmental impact of a product may get special attention in a (multi-national) company
=> improvement investments
- Products with excellent environmental performance may get improved competitiveness by means of LCA
=> increase market shares

Possible next steps

- Join LCA capacities within the country for simple data investigation on the commons (energy supply, materials, transport and waste treatment services), divide work
- To get started:
use existing databases, adapt them to country-specific needs, e.g.ecoinvent Database (see S3-1.1)
- Advantages:
 - reasonably low costs
 - flexible (by and by adaptations possible)
 - internationally compatible
 - data transparency required
- Organise workshops with user-groups to discuss daily problems in LCI data investigation