



UNEP/ SETAC Life Cycle Initiative

Life Cycle
Initiative



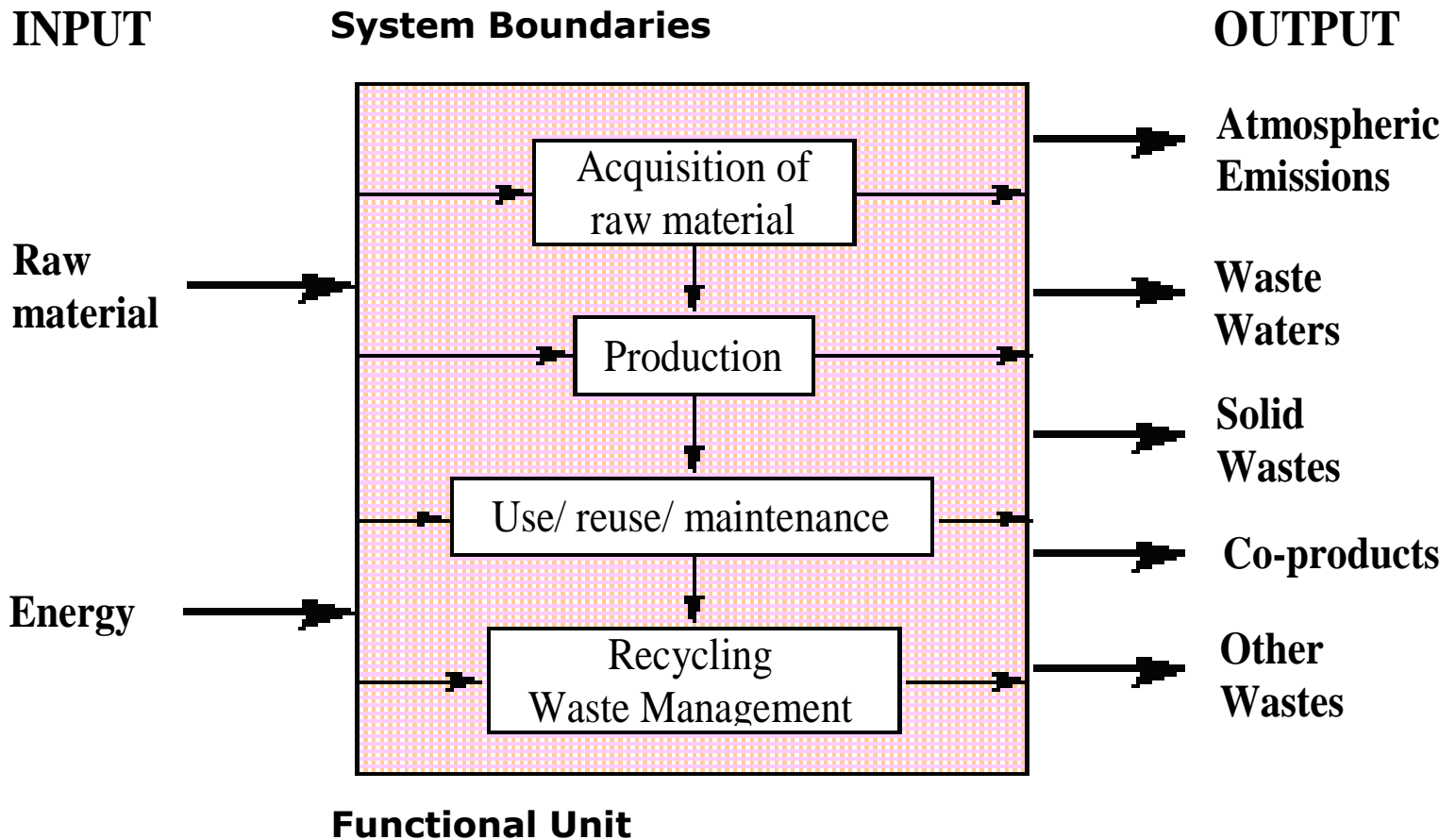
Towards Global Guidance for Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) Databases



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What is Life Cycle Assessment ?

ISO 14040 series



Motivation

- **Need for global guidance** to guarantee an efficient allocation of resources, to ensure reliability and quality.
- Decision in 2007 to produce a **manual on developing a countries' LCA data for energy systems**.
- However, the manual has **not been finalized** yet due to the important amount of diverging comments.
- Discussions indicate that there are a **number of contentious issues** around the way how to develop a LCA database
- The idea was born of a **workshop to address both political and technical issues** related to LCA database guidance:
 - Political issues include the agreement on principles at the global level on **how to set up and govern LCA databases**.
 - On the technical side the UNEP-SETAC International LCA database guidance should **cover requirements on goal & scope, modeling, quality, documentation and review**.

Vision statement for process

- **To provide global guidance on the establishment and maintenance of LCA databases, as the basis for future improved interlinkages of databases worldwide.**
- This will increase the credibility of existing LCA data, the generation of more data (also for application such as carbon and water footprint) and their overall accessibility. Hence, it provides a sound scientific basis for product stewardship in business & industry and life cycle based policies in governments, and ultimately, it helps to advance the sustainability of products.
- This should complement other ongoing initiatives.

Objectives of 2010 workshop

- Move towards global guidance on LCA databases by providing a ***platform to conclude on common agreements in the area of LCA databases and find ways to overcome contentious*** issues, e.g.:
 - context of regional and national as well as industry database initiatives in a globalised world
 - relationship of unit versus systems data
 - role of data from Input-Output Analysis
 - overall guarantee of data quality and transparency
 - relationship of inventory and life cycle impact assessment
- ***Striving towards consensus*** by identifying the expected agreements among the leading LCA database experts worldwide and by drafting a LCA database guidance document based on this.
- ***Focusing on life cycle inventories*** (but covering the relation to life cycle impact assessment), ***not being sector-specific and not coming up with a common database format.***
- ***Guidance then available for each regional and national as well as industry database initiatives to support their efforts.***

Next steps

- A. Final Workshop Steering Committee Formation**
- B. Final Program Development for the Workshop**
- C. Acquisition of Financial Assistance**
- D. Invitation of Workshop Participants**
- E. Management of Workshop Logistics**
- F. Activities to ensure a wide acceptance of the outcomes in the wider expert community**



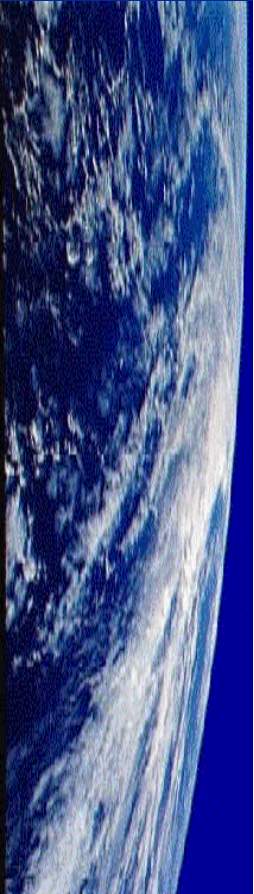
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