

Life Cycle



Initiative

LCI mini-workshop 2003,
24 September, Seattle, WA

**UNEP/ SETAC Life Cycle Initiative:
Focus of the Life Cycle Inventory program**

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UNEP's Production & Consumption Branch

- **Influencing production and consumption patterns**
 - “cleaner”, safer and more efficient;
 - examine underlying drivers for consumption;
 - identify obstacles and opportunities for change
 - improve products and services -> business
 - modernise infrastructure and policy frameworks -> governments
 - awareness, dialogue and reflection -> consumer groups
 - ... **create “consumption opportunities” for all...**

UNEP's focus of work on LCA

- Translate life cycle thinking into practice
- Reach out to those unfamiliar with LCA, in particular SMEs and NGOs, Governments and Business, especially in developing countries
- Report on level of acceptance and adoption of LCA worldwide
- Make the tool reliable and its results comparable
- Keep it simple and user-friendly

More challenges

- LCAs are neither simple nor cheap to carry out;
- No standard data and indicators;
- No easy access to LC information;
- No benchmarks for comparing the sustainability of products and services.



Mission and overall goals

“Develop and disseminate practical tools for evaluating the opportunities, risks, and trade-offs, associated with products over their whole life cycle.”

“Facilitate the access to knowledge and data for SME’s and developing countries in order to foster the use in Consumers, Governments and Industry decisions”

“Implement the ISO framework”

The Initiative's objectives



1. Exchange of information on the conditions for successful application of LCA and LC thinking;
2. Exchange of information about the interface between LCA and other tools;
3. Implementation of education activities related to the application of LCA and LC thinking;
4. Enhancement of the availability of sound LCA data and methods;
5. Provision of guidance on the use of LCA data and methods.

Programs



- LCM program:
Application of and education on LCA and life cycle thinking
- LCI program:
Enhancement of sound LCI data and methods
- LCIA program:
Enhancement of sound LCIA data and methods

LCI Program



The LCI program improves global access to transparent, high quality life cycle data by hosting and facilitating expert groups whose work is shared through (web-based) information systems.

The long-term deliverables consist of:

- An information system for easy access to peer reviewed Life Cycle Inventory databases;
- A compilation of life cycle studies to identify best practice in different industry sectors and world regions.



LCI definition study & task forces

The LCI Definition Study and proposed Task Forces (TFs) have emerged from a year-long process which included a global user needs survey and an international process of drafting, peer review, and discussions at multiple international workshops.

The following LCI TFs are proposed:

1. LCI Data Registry
2. LCI on Database Characteristics and Quality
3. LCI Methodological Consistency
4. LCA Case Studies Library with Meta-Analyses
5. LCI Database Capacity Development



Aims of TF on LCI Data Registry

To update and expand the working summary of available LCI databases (produced during the definition study), including both public/national databases as well as LCI databases being made available by industry associations.

The results will be used to create a web-based, UNEP LCI Data Registry, which provides basic meta-data and web links to the appropriate sites.

Aims of LCI on Database Characteristics and Quality



To facilitate voluntary and practice-oriented movement towards consistency and commonality of database properties, while avoiding the role of drafting “standards” per se.

The TF will pursue consistency on four core characteristics of databases:

- Data quality
- Documentation format
- Data exchange format
- Nomenclature, which will be addressed jointly with participants and task forces of the LCIA program.

Aims of TF on LCI

Methodological Consistency



To initiate and stimulate processes, studies, and forums that facilitate voluntary and practice-oriented movement towards transparency, ultimately contributing to improved consistency and commonality of LCI methodological practice.

Aims of TF on LCA Case Studies Library with Meta-Analyses



To create an “LCA Case Studies Library” which contains two types of information:

- a. Compilations of LCAs on specific topic areas; and
- b. Meta-analyses of the LCAs in these topic area compilations.

Generating this information is a task that provides an excellent opportunity to provide guidance and build capacity in the critical assessment and comparison of LCA studies and in making use of their results in drafting summaries for decision support.

Aims of TF on LCI Databases and Capacity-Building

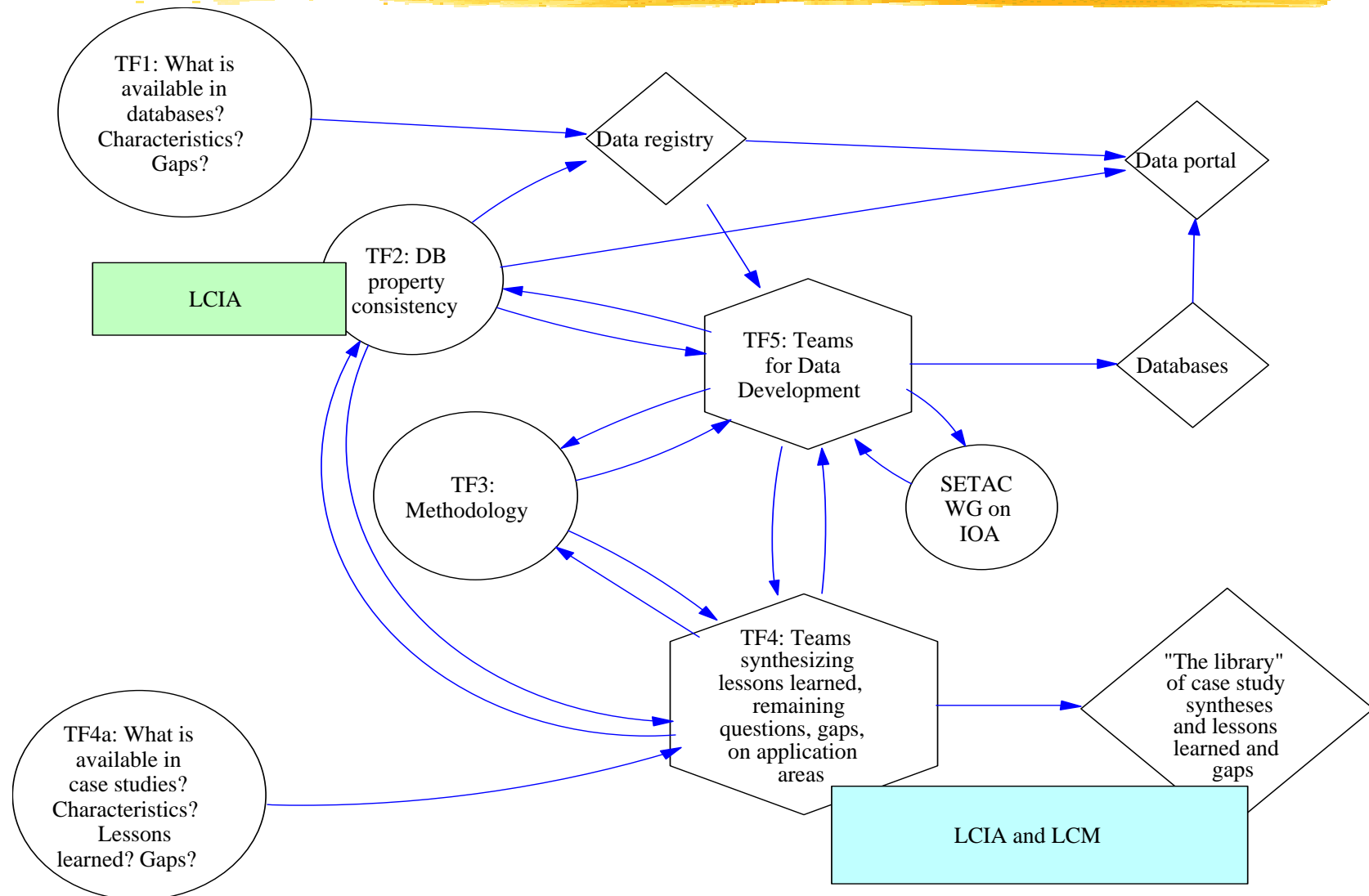


To create an “Starter” LCI databases within countries that do not now have them and to provide operational “field tests” of the strengths, weaknesses, applicability and practicability of the results of TFs 2 and 3, and, where applicable, of the guidance on I/O and hybrid LCI database development (SETAC Working Group).

The process-oriented aim is to build, through “on the job training” involving teams that include both experts and novices, the capacity to develop LCI databases.



Relationship among the TFs and other programs



Expressions of interest



- Application form at:
<http://www.unep.org/sustain/lcinitiative>
- Email with following information to: **sc@unep.fr**
 - Programme interested in
 - Name contact person
 - Name and type of organisation
 - Contact details with geographic situation
 - Keywords for subjects of expertise
 - List of publications or projects related to subjects