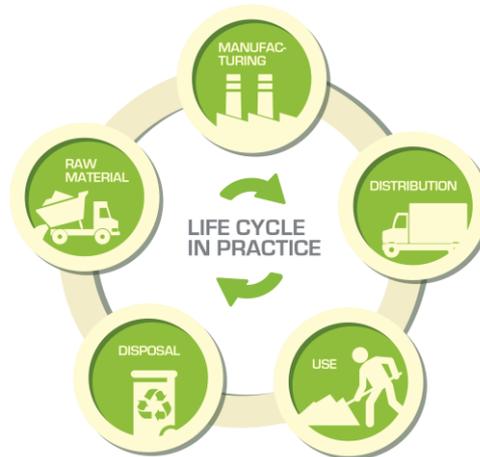


## LCiP's maturity assessment conclusions (Recycling Sector)

### FOREWORD

#### Life Cycle approaches

Life cycle thinking helps companies make their businesses more attractive while limiting their environmental impacts and improving their competitiveness. At the same time it is a strategic choice to orient developments based on Life Cycle Thinking (LCT). This method helps to assess the environmental impacts of a system (product, service, process, organization ...), starting from the extraction of raw materials to its end of life.



#### LCiP Project

LCiP<sup>1</sup> aims to help SMEs in France (Nord-Pas de Calais), Belgium (Wallonia), Portugal and Spain (Basque country) to identify and reduce the environmental impacts of their products and services across the entire Life Cycle in three sectors: building, energy & recycling.

#### Maturity assessment

The maturity assessment aims to understand the current capacity of business sectors and SMEs in each sector and country to implement Life Cycle approaches. Based on a common framework of questions, surveys and interviews have been conducted in each sector in each region. The qualitative assessment for the **Recycling sector** (including France (Nord-Pas de Calais) and Belgium (Wallonia)) is presented below.

<sup>1</sup> the project is co-funded by the [LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance Programme](#) of the EU

## MATURITY ASSESSMENT RESULTS

### Segmentation:

More than 50 organisations provided feedback to the maturity assessment survey, covering the entire value chain of the recycling sector (companies and support organizations<sup>2</sup>):

- **Companies** are mainly regional and national SMEs and big companies offering B2B services.
- **Support organisations** are mainly private organisations with a mix funding (public and private) within a regional/national activity.

### Overall environmental strategy:

Environmental considerations are always integrated in the strategy of both companies and support organisations, and include the involvement of top management. Moreover, environmental issues are largely considered in the investment process. All actors agree that energy and resource management are the main environmental issues for the sector, but also highlight issues related to air and soil pollution.

### Life Cycle orientation of the business's environmental management:

More than 80% of the companies surveyed have already an environmental management system in place, and around 50% of the companies consider the life cycle of their products//services in their environmental strategy.

At the same time, 80% of the support organisations proposed services in this field (LCA, Carbon accounting, etc.). Most of them (84%) have been working on Life cycle approaches for more than 2 years.

As the Life cycle approaches are not yet mainstreamed in the sector, the communication is not implemented.

*North of France specificity: The main approaches for companies to manage their environmental impacts are to optimize the supply chain logistics, use clean technology processes and reduce waste...*

*Wallonia specificity: Those companies with a Life Cycle approach in place have developed it over a year ago (50% from 2 to 5 years ago).*

### Expectations and improvement

Three needs are raised as central by the companies:

- More Awareness on Life Cycle Approaches
- Support and consultancy to help implementation
- Improved access to Life Cycle Tools and databases

Research, training and public subsidies are considered as less important in the short term.

<sup>2</sup> This covers all organisations that are directly within the value chain (research institutes, eco-organisms, consultants, etc.)

## PERSPECTIVES

- ⇒ **Awareness raising** on life cycle approaches is highlighted as a crucial point for companies. This includes **events, trainings, support** ... particularly for SMEs.
- ⇒ Regarding the insufficient access to LCA **data and tools**, the issue may be overcome by mutualizing efforts. Physical and online resource centers are developed in LCiP project and can contribute to tackling this issue.
- ⇒ **Regulatory and normative** context plays a key role in the implementation of life cycle approaches by companies. At the same time many of them (80% of respondents) have an **environmental management system** (mainly certified under **ISO 14001**). The update of the norm in 2015 to integrate life cycle approaches (from site vision to product vision), is a real opportunity to implement LC approaches in SMEs.
- ⇒ Another point raised by companies is the **lack of case studies showing the concrete added value of developing Life Cycle approaches** in the recycling sector. Promoting success stories and case studies (some will be developed within the framework of LCiP) in events and through networks is a good way to attract companies.
- ⇒ One of the difficulties mentioned is that recycling companies **do not control the upstream and downstream activities** which is a **problem to foster ecodesign and closing the loop**. There is a need for collaborative approaches throughout the supply chain, in order to develop Life Cycle approaches in the recycling sector.

For further **information on Life Cycle approaches?**  
Please visit LCiP website: [www.lifecip.eu](http://www.lifecip.eu)  
(More information on the maturity assessment in the section “**mapping maturity**”)