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Guidance on Organizational LCA

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Content

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- The flagship project

- Guidance document

- Technical framework

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Introduction — Motivation

- The **organization-level** decision making has an **influential role** in shaping environmental outcomes. Environmental aspects should be considered, as well as technical and economic ones.

- Organization approaches have mainly focused on **single aspects**.

  ➢ Multi-impact assessment is needed to avoid trade-offs.

- High % of impacts in the **value chain**, are due to raw materials, transport, energy production, etc.

  ➢ A perspective beyond the organization boundaries is to be used.

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Introduction — Existing organizational approaches

- Life cycle thinking currently offers a **great opportunity** to include O-LCA, although organization perspective was mostly overlooked.

- **ISO/TS 14072** "Environmental management — Life cycle assessment — Requirements and guidelines for Organizational Life Cycle Assessment".

  ➢ Framework for the Guidance (developed in parallel).

- Since 2009, **organizational environmental analysis standards** started to emerge (GHG Protocol Scope 3 Standard; ISO/TR 14069…)

  – Some do not require considering the entire life cycle (or optional)

  – Single-impact oriented. Hiding burden shifting between steps of the value chain and between impact categories.

- **Organization Environmental Footprint – EC OEF**

  – Many points in common with O-LCA. In disagreement with some ISO 14040 requirements

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The flagship project — Goal and tasks

To contribute to demonstrate that the **benefits and the potential of the life cycle approach** are not restricted to product assessment. It shows that its application to organizations is **relevant, meaningful and feasible** within the framework of product LCA standards.

Started in: April 2013. **Expected duration**: 3 years.

Task 1: Draft Guidance Document (commissioned WG)

Task 2: Consolidated Guidance Document (feedback stakeholders)
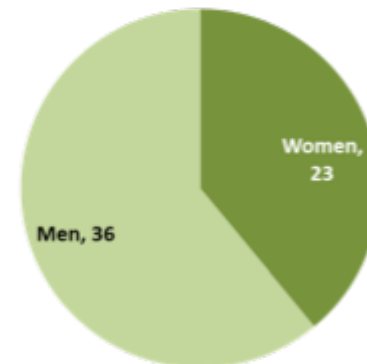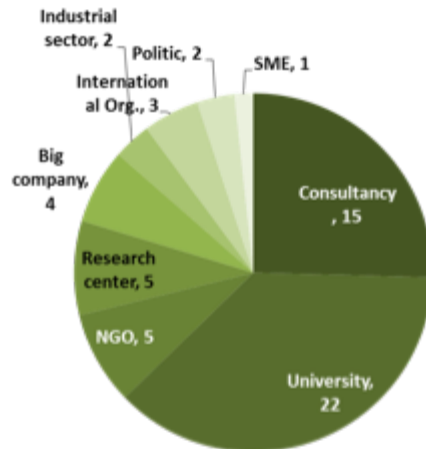
Task 3: Road-tested Guidance (start spring 2015)

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The flagship project — Participants

Promoting group:

- **Prof. Atsushi Inaba**, Kogakuin University, Japan (co-leader)
- **Prof. Dr. Matthias Finkbeiner**, TU Berlin, Germany (co-leader)
- Dr. Julia Martínez-Blanco, TU Berlin, Germany (coordinator)
- Ms. Sonia Valdivia, World Resource Forum, Global
- Dr. Llorenç Milà-i-Canals, UNEP, Global
- Ms. Ana Quirós, ECO GLOBAL & ALCALA, Costa Rica

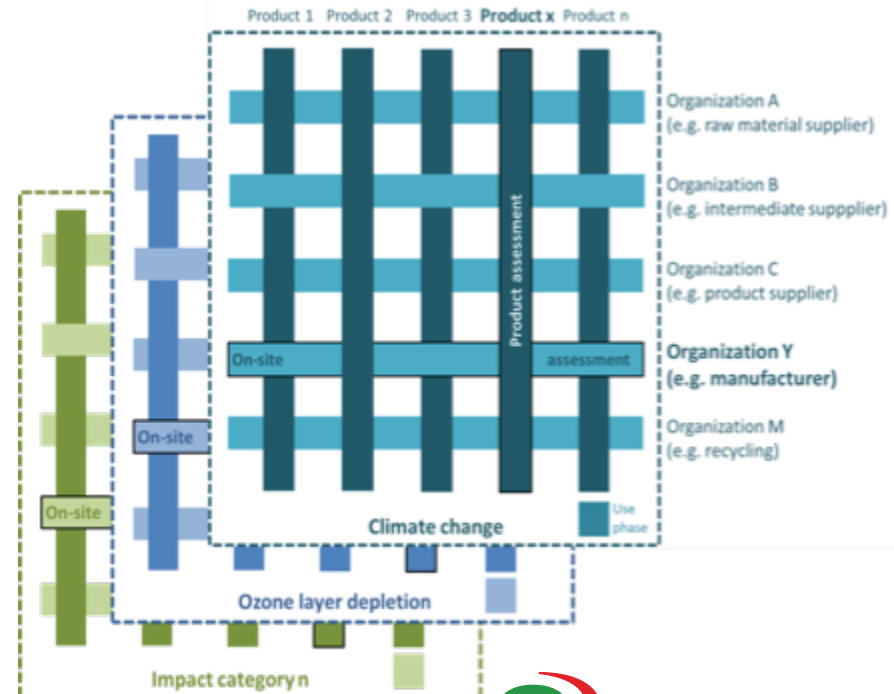**Members involved in Guidance drafting and consolidation ≈ 70**

+ case study providers + road testers (2015)

Industrial sector, 2 — Politic, 2 — SME, 1
International Org., 3
Big company, 4
Consultancy, 15
Research center, 5
NGO, 5
University, 22

Global, 1
North America, 8 — Africa, 5 — Asia Pacific, 6
Latin America, 11
Europe, 26

Women, 23
Men, 36

Guidance — What is O-LCA?

Organizational LCA is a compilation and evaluation of the inputs, outputs and potential environmental impacts of the activities associated with the organization adopting a life cycle perspective (ISO/TS 14072).

O-LCA main features

- – the object of study is **the organization**;

- – the approach is **the life cycle**;

- – the categories considered lead to **multi-criteria assessment**.

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Guidance — Why O-LCA?

Examples of organization goals served by O-LCA:

- **Gain insight** in internal operations and value chain.

- **Identify hotspots** and prioritize actions.

- Assist environmental **performance tracking**.

- Ground **environmental communication** and address stakeholders' enquiries. E.g., sustainability reporting.

- **Promote** environmental management along the value chain.

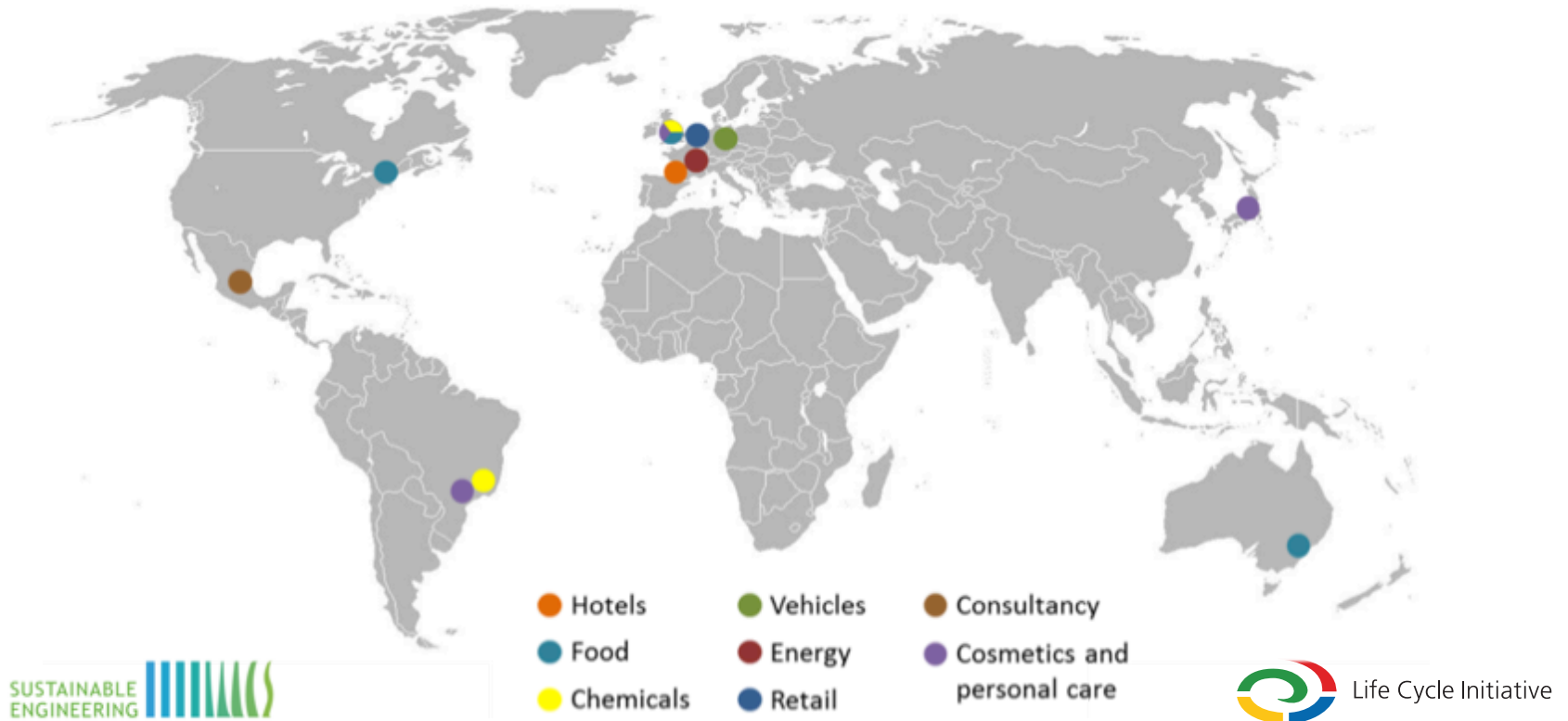- Provide guidance for organizations in developing countries.

- …

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Scope of the Guidance

"Organizational Life Cycle Assessment – Guidance for organizations to conduct LCA considering their value chain"
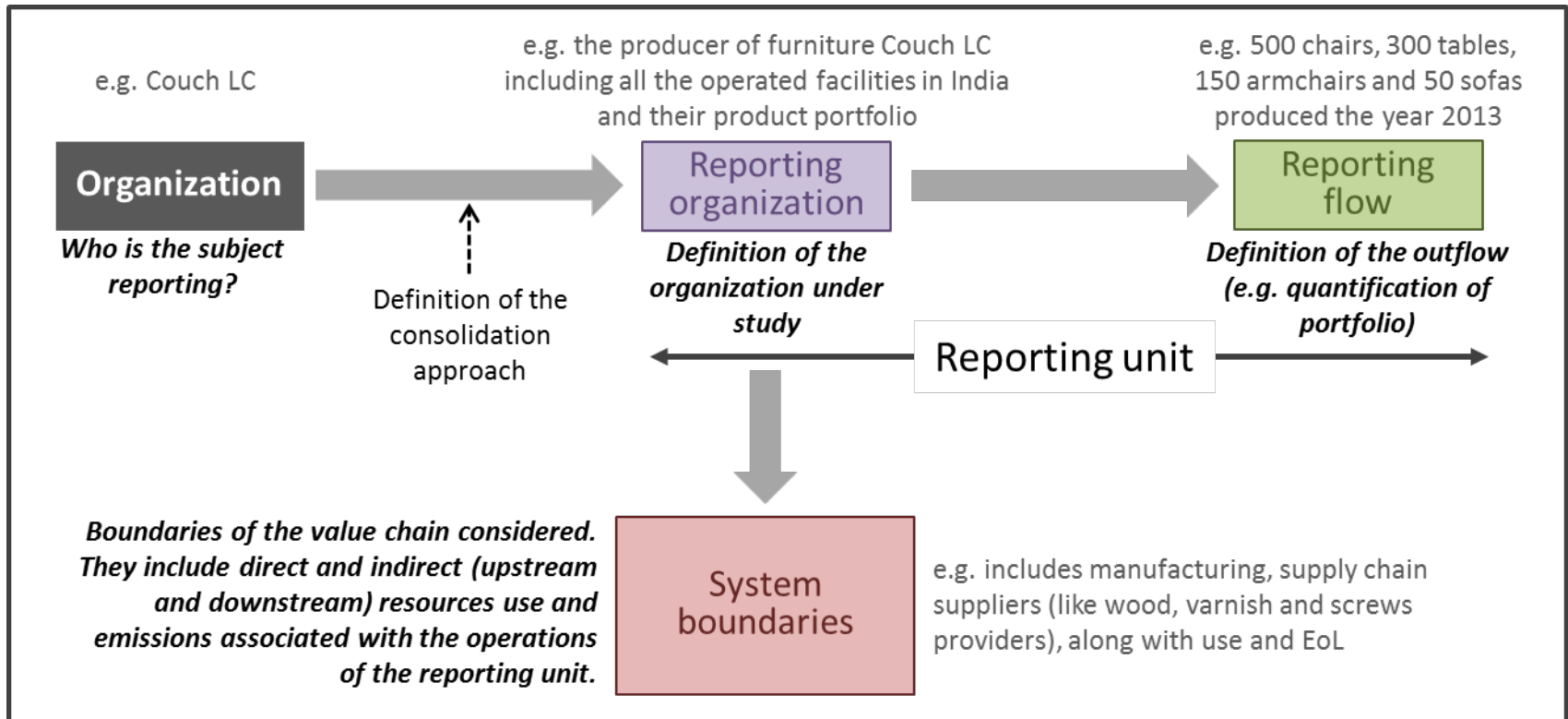
- Highlight potential of organizational perspective within LCT.

- **Environmental** performance (potentiality for S-LCA).

- Recommendations about **challenging methodological issues**.

- Build on existing **internationally-agreed guides**, methods and standards => it particularly aligns with upcoming **ISO/TS 14072**.

- Not for **comparative assertions** intended to be disclosed to the public => intended for performance tracking

- Intended for organizations of all sizes, both public and private, and in all economic or institutional sectors/levels
  => **pathways** to the implementation of O-LCA + **early success stories**

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Guidance — Early success stories
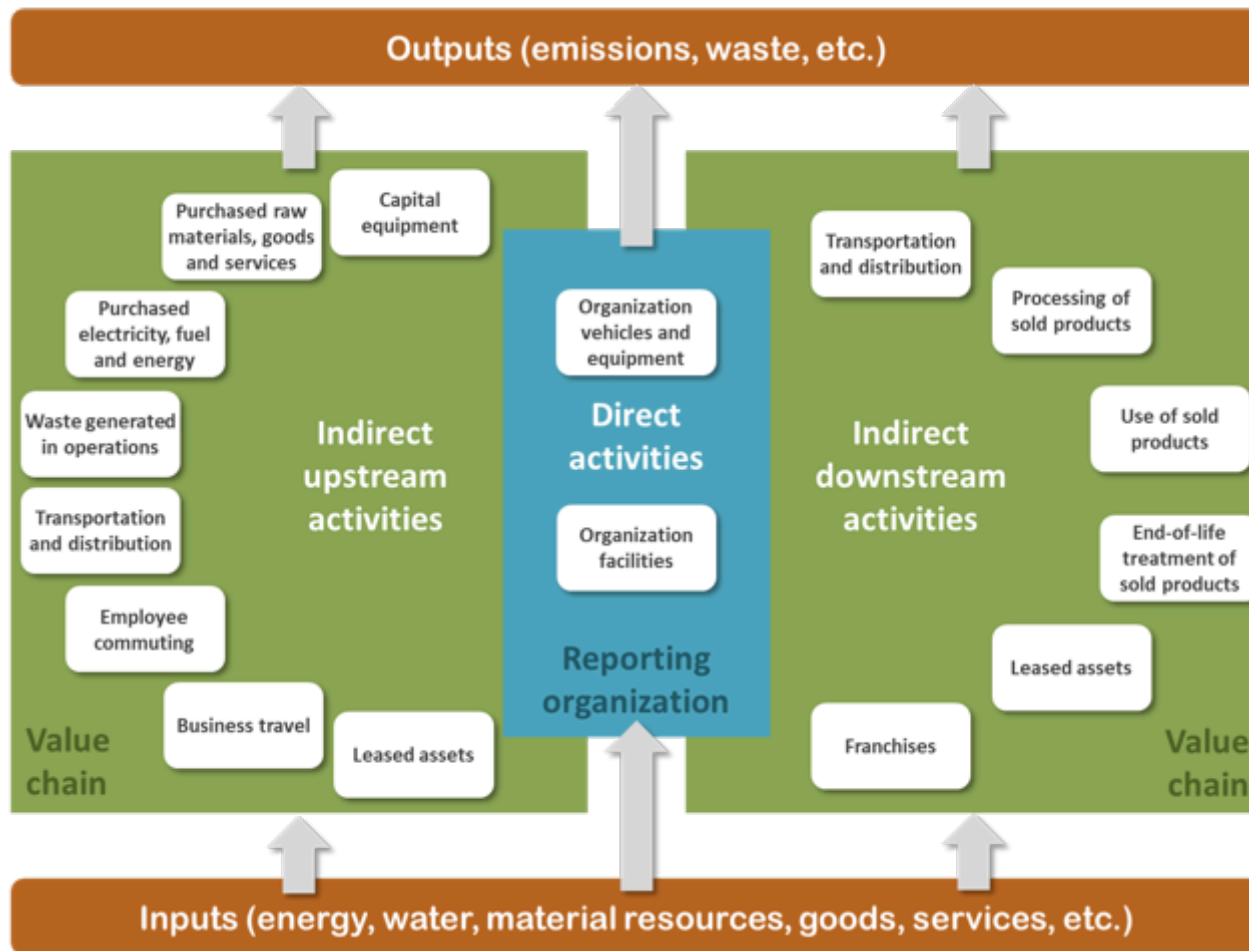
Although complete applications of O-LCA are not currently documented-available, this Guidance aims to share the experience acquired by some early success stories on the use of approaches that may lead or be encompassed by the more comprehensive O-LCA.

Hotels Vehicles Consultancy
Food Energy Cosmetics and personal care
Chemicals Retail

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Technical framework — Scope Definition

Technical framework — Involved activities

Future - Next steps

Task 2: Consolidated Guidance Document

– Publish the document by April 2015

Task 3: Road-tested Guidance (2015)

– Application of the Guidance to 10 organizations.

– Use different pathways. Different sectors, sizes, regions...

– Publish the results.

Outlook

– Further explore the potential use for assessing social aspects and impacts

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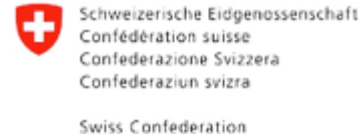Life Cycle Initiative

Future - How to collaborate?

- Be one of the first organizations applying O-LCA during the **road-testing** and help on the adjustment of the methodology.

- Be **our voice and disseminate** the methodology.

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Contact flagship project: julia.martinezblanco@tu-berlin.de

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