

## LIFE CYCLE IN PRACTICE – FEEDBACK FROM A SME'S COACH

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Theme:

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### ABSTRACT (500 WORDS)

The application of Life Cycle Approaches – including Life Cycle Assessment, eco-design and environmental labelling – is becoming an increasing reality for business, and a growing challenge in many economic sectors. Businesses are facing increasing legal and market requirements to enhance resource efficiency and reduce the environmental impact of their products & services. To significantly address this challenge, the Life Cycle in Practice (LCiP) project was conceived, aiming to promote the uptake of LC approaches particularly in SMEs. This project is co-financed by the LIFE Program + Policy and Governance on the theme of the environment of the European Union, supporting technological projects with significant environmental impacts.

The overall aim of the LCiP project is to help SMEs in France, Belgium, Portugal and Spain in reducing the environmental impacts of their products and services across the entire Life Cycle in three sectors: Buildings & Construction, Waste Management and Energy Equipment. Thirty-two businesses are selected in the four regions, twelve being located in Wallonia. GreenWin, the Walloon partner, has mandated several teams well-known for their expertise in LCA to coach them.

ULg-PEPs coached three SMS's to help them to carry out the Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) of their product and accordingly to identify the strengths and weakness of the products and/or processes. Two of them are involved in building insulation (hemp concrete blocs IsoHemp and sound insulation panels Acoustix made by Pan-Terre), and the third one is developing an accelerated composting equipment for food waste (Eco-Cleaner).

Concretely, we realised the LCA of the three products in a cradle to gate perspective. The results show possible environmental impact improvement for all the products, even if they are eco-designed.

As a coach, the experience of working closely with highly motivated people in small structures is very gratifying and a smart way to help life cycle approaches to develop in our region.

We are pleased to go on this initiative by hosting one of the Physical Resource Centres in the University of Liège to welcome SMEs seeking to integrate LC approaches into their businesses, and give them access to selected LCA tools, reading material, expertise, training and advice.

Results and Online Resource Centre are centralised on the LCiP website: <http://www.lifelcip.eu/>

**Key words:** *Life Cycle in Practice, SME's, life cycle resource centre*