



“The Building Products Innovation Council (BPIC) announces the release of the Building Products Life Cycle Inventory”



A New toolkit for building material life cycle assessment

Why:

Life Cycle Assessment has been recognised as a fundamental method for measuring, reporting and establishing the basis for improving the environmental impact of building products. Building Products Innovation Council (BPIC) took up the challenge of creating a level playing field for life cycle assessment of building materials in Australia by conducting a major research project to establish the Building Products Life Cycle Inventory (BP LCI)

What is the BP LCI?

The BP LCI is a methodology and database for reporting the life cycle environmental impacts of building products. It is a major milestone for the industry because it provides the first scientifically reliable and independently validated Australian database for Life Cycle Assessment of building products.

BPIC, BRANZ, and the Australian Life Cycle Assessment Society (ALCAS) in partnership with the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research and the CSIRO conducted this three- year research project. The primary objectives being to provide the building industry with the information required to conduct Life Cycle Assessment of building products and therefore the built environment. The BP LCI database and methodology establishes a level playing field for building industry Life Cycle Environmental Assessment (LCA) because it provides consistent and comparable methods and data across and within all product categories. It is freely available to all industry stakeholders from BPIC.

What Is the Role Life Cycle Assessment?

LCAs are vitally important to enabling the building industry to achieve better environmental outcomes:

- **Manufacturers** need to know the environmental impact of their products and how they can be improved. They want to be able to advise builders and building designers how to use their products for optimal environmental performance. To do so they need to measure report and improve the environmental impacts of their products. The BP LCI provides the data and methodology for building products LCA.
- **Policy analysts and researchers** want to know the answers to the same questions so they can develop regulations and guidance for improved environmental outcomes from the built environment. For instance the embedded energy and the impact of building design on energy efficiency over the life cycle of a product are matters that LCA can contribute to.
- **Developers of building design tools** want to incorporate LCA results in their tools so that designers can use these tools to optimise the environmental impact of buildings in concert with structural and cost considerations.
- **Environmental assessment suppliers** want to use LCA to produce environmental product declarations (EPD, Type III environmental assessment) and Ecolabelling suppliers want to use the same data to set criteria for product certification (Type I, ecolabelling). These are important ways for a manufacturer to present and validate the environmental impact of their product.
- Developers and users of **LCA practitioner tools** need LCA data to drive their software services.
- **Building buyers and owners** want to be confident that the environmental impact of the buildings they buy are designed based on a thorough understanding of the environmental impacts and to meet regulatory requirements that reflect LCA findings.

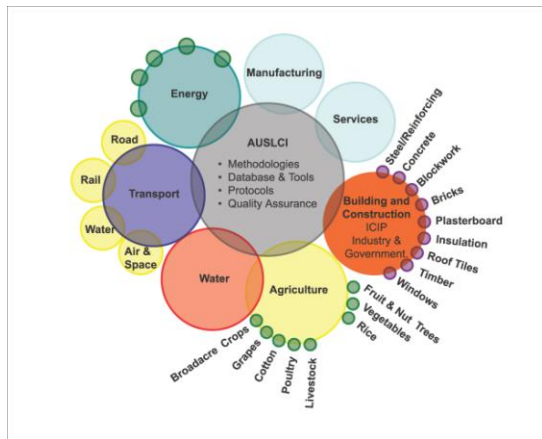
How:

The BP LCI provides life cycle environmental impact information on over 100 building materials categories. It also provides guidance on the use of this data that is consistent with the internationally recognised standards for LCI and LCA work.

The ten major nationally represented building material associations from BPIC participated in providing data to the BP LCI:

- ASI Australian Steel Institute
- AWA Australian Window Association
- CMAA Concrete Masonry Association of Australia
- CCAA Cement Concrete & Aggregates Australia
- FWPA Forest & Wood Products Australia
- GBMA Gypsum Board Manufacturers of Australasia
- IMAA Insulation Manufacturers Association of Australia
- RTAA Roofing Tile Association of Australia
- SRIA Steel Reinforcement Institute of Australia
- Think Brick representing the Clay Brick & Paver manufacturers

The BPLCI will also contribute to the larger scale sustainability initiative being developed by the Australian Life Cycle Assessment Society (ALCAS) – Australian Life Cycle Inventory Database (AusLCI) - which will take into account other environmentally sensitive areas such as transport, water, agriculture and energy.



What next:

The BP LCI will facilitate in the development of **Environmental Product Declarations** which can provide architects, designers, retailers and consumers with a benchmark for comparing and assessing the sustainability of products. Building material suppliers could also use their individual BP LCI to appropriately promote the environmental attributes of their products and services.

* The BPIC LCI project was jointly funded by the Building Products Innovation Council and AusIndustry, and conducted in partnership with ALCAS and BRANZ. The major contract suppliers to the project included Edge Environment and the CSIRO.

When:

In February 2011 BPIC will launch the Building Products LCI (BP LCI) on its website, with handy information sheets to answer those Frequently Asked Questions.

BP LCI Launch & Seminar	Canberra	28 th February 2011
BP LCI Information Seminars:	Melbourne	16 th March
	Brisbane	23 rd March
	Sydney	30 th March (sold out)
	Perth	7 th April
	Sydney	11 th April
	Hobart	13 th April
	Adelaide	28 th April

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