

PRESS RELEASE

To be released immediately

18 May 2022

The application of LCA in environmental public policies has a bright (and circular) future that needs to be explored collaboratively

How to bring together LCA and public policies? This is the challenge accepted by [LCA4Regions](#). This European-funded project already showed that a dialogue between public authorities, research centres and businesses is possible and should be continued for LCA to become an integral part of policy making to reach sustainability. Project partners shared their first conclusions and recommendations to take concrete action, taking as an example the sustainable built environment, during a conference in Brussels.



For already more than two years the partners of the [Interreg Europe LCA4Regions project](#) have been working on fostering the use of life cycle methods while implementing environmental policy to improve their implementation and benefits when it comes to sustainability. Last 12 June, they gathered in Brussels to present their work and take stock of the situation regarding the use of life cycle analysis (LCA) in both policy planning and implementation.

As reminded by Fritz Balkau, expert of the project, in a context of Earth's overshoot day getting constantly nearer to the beginning of the year, LCA is one of the powerful tools in our hands to solve the challenges of our time (climate, resources, social equality, etc.). This makes the LCA4Regions project very timely and necessary. The Good Practices and experiences already exchanged during the project highlight many local actions that are improved by LCA and can inspire other public authorities.

To mainstream the results of their work, the LCA4Regions partners are working on a roadmap that aims at providing recommendations on how to design effective and sustainable policies incorporating LCA methods and instilling a momentum at large, through the proper development and monitoring of policies. This document, just like the LCA4Regions project, is just a first step. Indeed, the discussions between ACR+, the Pyhäjärvi Institute and the Lombardy Region concluded that applying LCA to local policy making requires taking simplified steps, one of which is to find a common language between public authorities, research centres, and business sector.

Creating a common language to improve sustainability is actually the path followed by the Level(s) initiative, a European framework for sustainable buildings developed by the European Commission and presented to the LCA4Regions audience by Josefina Lindblom. This entry point for applying circular economy principles in buildings was one of the examples discussed during a roundtable

focusing on the sustainable built environment - a recurrent challenge for many public authorities. Once again, collaboration came out as key to reach sustainability in this sector and manage the energy transition. Other points raised by the two other panellists, representing the Lodzkie Region and the RINA consultancy, included improving training and building competences, simplifying LCA models to make them more widely applicable, and keeping in sight the wider picture also in terms of durability and impact over the years.

In the afternoon, the partners commented on their journey so far to improve their own policy instruments through the use of LCA. They especially exchanged on the difficulties they experienced, and on the skills they earned while preparing their Action Plans. One of the outstanding lessons was the great results they could achieve by bringing together various stakeholders such as researchers, businesses, and institutions, regardless of how tough it could be at times.

The LCA4Regions partners will now have a little bit more than a year to implement their Action Plans. The project will end in July 2023 but it will definitely not be the end of the journey; with LCA4Regions partners opened the way on finding a practical use and common language between public authorities, research centres and businesses when talking about LCA. Through the seven [Transnational Learning Journeys](#) of the project, they touched many topics that need to be further explored. They already proved that a dialogue between LCA and public policies is possible and should be continued in a collaborative way.

Presentations from the event are available for download on [LCA4Region's event page](#).

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The LCA4Regions project - Improved Environment and Resource Efficiency through use of Life Cycle Instruments for implementation of regional policies of the European Union - aims at promoting life-cycle based approach in policy instruments through the introduction of the Life Cycle Assessment methodology. Find out more information about the project on www.interregeurope.eu/lca4regions.

