



Common methodology for environmental footprinting: status and future

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Problem definition

1. Confusion in the market on how to measure, make and understand a claim on the environmental performance of products and companies (leading to **misleading claims, unfair commercial practices** and **greenwashing**).
2. Lack of a level playing field, **fragmentation of the markets** on methods for reporting environmental performance of products (including both good and service) and companies.
3. Companies would like to have to invest more in **greening their value chain**. The lack of consistent and science-based multi-criteria environmental information covering the entire value chain makes it difficult for companies to address issues like "green sourcing" and investing in tackling the most relevant environmental impacts for their products/sectors.



Single Market Act

Proposal No 10: Before 2012, the Commission will look into the feasibility of an initiative on the **Ecological Footprint** of Products to address the issue of the environmental impact of products, including carbon emissions. The initiative will explore possibilities for establishing a **common European methodology** to assess and label them.

Council Conclusions 20 December 2010

The Council invites the Commission to *“develop a **common methodology** on the quantitative assessment of environmental impacts of products, throughout their life-cycle, in order to support the assessment and labelling of products”*

Resource Efficiency Roadmap – 20 September 2011

- ✓ Establish a common methodological approach to enable **Member States and the private sector** to assess, display and benchmark the environmental performance of products, services and companies based on a comprehensive assessment of environmental impacts over the life-cycle ('environmental footprint') (in 2012)
- ✓ Ensure better understanding of consumer behaviour and **provide better information** on the environmental footprints of products, including preventing the use of misleading claims, and refining **eco-labelling schemes** (in 2012)

What is the situation of environmental assessments today?

- *Several methods and standards exist (ISO 14040 since 1996), many recent developments focus on one issue (e.g. climate change, water)*
- **1 expert** doing assessments using **3 different methods** will not necessarily end up with similar results
- **3 experts** doing assessments using **the same method** will necessarily end up with similar results



Analysis of methods

Products

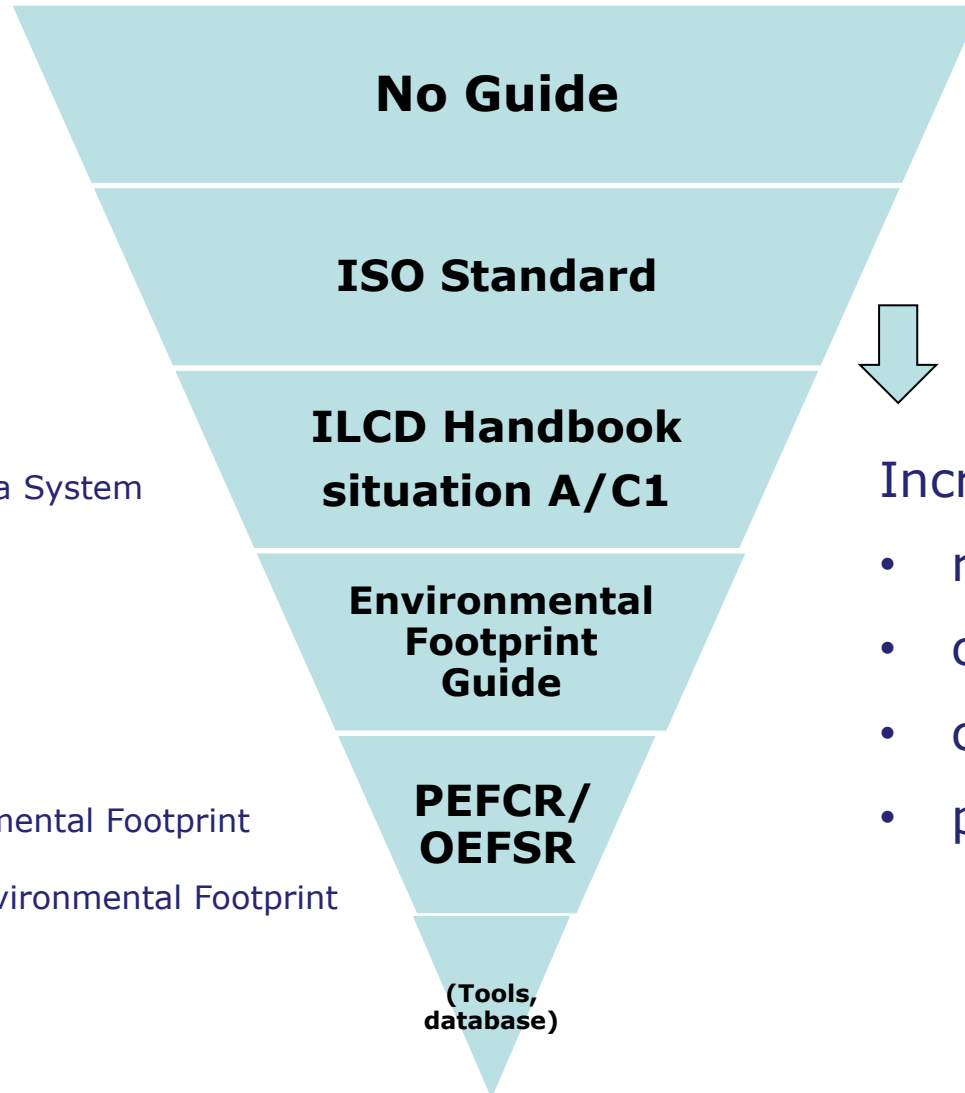
- ISO 14044 (2006)
- ISO 14067 (Nov 2010d)
- ILCD (2010)
- BP X 30 (2009)
- PAS 2050 (2008, Nov 2010d, Jan 2011d)
- Ecological footprint (2009)
- WBCSD/WRI (product: Nov 2010)

Organisations

- ISO 14064 (2006)
- Bilan Carbone
- DEFRA guide (GHG)
- CDP Water footprint
- WBCSD/WRI (corporate: Nov 2010)
- GRI



European
Commission



ILCD: International
Reference Life Cycle Data System

PEFCR: Product Environmental Footprint
Category Rule
OEFSR: Organisation Environmental Footprint
Sector Rule



Increasing

- reproducibility
- consistency
- comparability
- practicality

Timelines



**Product
Environmental
footprint**

**Organisation
Environmental
footprint**

Analysis of existing methodologies

March 2011

Draft methodology guides

June 2011

September 2011

Training on methodology

13-15 July 2011

19-20 Oct 2011

Invited Stakeholder Meeting

28-30 November 2011

Pilot tests concluded

20 Dec 2011

February 2012

**Stakeholder consultation on the policy
options**

January 2011 – April 2012

Final methodological guide

1st Quarter 2013

The Environmental Footprint

- Builds on existing methods
- Is applicable without having to consult a series of other documents (“one-stop shop”)
- Provides comprehensive evaluation along the entire life cycle (from raw materials to end of life / waste management)
- Provides comprehensive coverage of potential environmental impacts (no ‘single issue’ method)
- Enables comparability of results, e.g. of different products (but only if PEFCRs/OEFSRs are available)



- ONE common methodology instead of VERY MANY
- PEFCRs/OEFSRs
- Creating user-friendly tools supporting the calculation of environmental footprint based on PEFCRs/OEFSRs (EC, industrial associations, market)
- Free/ low-cost access to good quality life cycle data



Challenges

- Convergence of methodologies at EU level and internationally
- Life Cycle data, data quality & availability
- Need to develop consistent Product and Sector Category Rules
- Involvement of stakeholders (particularly SMEs)
- The verification system



Pilots' objectives:

1. Test the process for the development of PEFCRs and OEFSRs
2. Test different approaches for verification systems (embedded impacts)
3. Communication vehicles
4. Links with investors' and MSs' needs

The Commission will "lead" a limited number of pilots but there will also be a "[call for volunteers](#)" addressed to Member States or industries who might like to lead the development of more PEFCRs and/or OEFSRs.

Independently from who "leads", this will be an open, transparent, multi-stakeholder process.



- Impact Assessment of the different policy options (**November 2012**)
- Internal discussion among Commission services (**December 2012/January 2013**)
- Formal adoption of the Communication "**Building the Single Market for Green Products**" (*working title*) (**March 2013?**)
- Launch of a European pilot on PEF/OEF implementation (**March 2013?**)
- Start of the pilots (**July 2013?**)
- Further methodological work related to PEF/OEF (**January 2013**)
- International dialogue on methodologies and data (**continuous**)



Thank you for your attention

For any further information

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/corporate_footprint.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/product_footprint.htm

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