

Call for Papers
for the Conference Stream on
Life Cycle Approaches and Sustainable Development in Africa
within the
11th Annual International Sustainable Development Research Conference

June 6-8, 2005 in Helsinki at Finlandia Hall, Finland

Conference Website: www.erpenvironment.org

Session Convenors:

Dr. Evans Kituyi, University of Nairobi, Kenya and
Dr. Toolseeram Ramjeawon, University of Mauritius, Mauritius

Session Rationale

Recent events demonstrate the increasing recognition by governments of the important role of science and technology in sustainable economic development. Of growing interest is the potential role of life cycle approaches in integrating production and consumption strategies to prevent piece-meal approaches to development. The Malmo Declaration by world governments in 2000 called for a life cycle economy. The WSSD Plan of Implementation also called for development of production and consumption policies to improve products and services provided while reducing environmental and health impacts using science-based approaches such as life cycle analysis.

To respond to these challenges, initiatives such as UNEP/SETAC Life Cycle Initiative (developing the life cycle concepts and tools) and the 10year framework of programmes to promote sustainable consumption and production patterns (Marrakech Process) called for by WSSD in 2002 have since emerged. The establishment of the African Life Cycle Assessment Network (ALCAN)—to build capacity of African institutions to apply the tools—is partial response to this challenge. There is emerging concern that those responsible for setting sustainable development agenda for African countries are remotely aware of life cycle approaches in general and particularly how these may be efficiently harnessed in solving the region’s key production and consumption challenges.

Numerous success stories exist of how life cycle approaches have worked in other parts of the world, including key developing countries in Asia and Latin America, and a growing number in Africa. Dissemination of messages on “what works” (prerequisites for effective LCA application in national development) can go a long way in enhancing the process within countries in the region. A presentation of specific case studies from

countries in Africa is particularly desirable. These could be success stories from energy, water resource, waste management, SME or agricultural sectors.

Demand for LCA in Africa's Development Planning

Towards this end, a key step for Africa has been the establishment of the African Roundtable for Sustainable Consumption and Production (ARSCP) to coordinate the promotion of sustainable consumption and production activities—an institution endorsed by the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) at its 10th Regular Session in June 2004. Among the ARSCP's mission is to incorporate sustainable consumption and production concepts in the implementation of the Action Plans of NEPAD Environment Initiative and Science & Technology Programme to make them contribute towards the 10 year framework of programmes. A key programmatic item for the ARSCP is to catalogue key lessons and development messages from successful LCA cases in the region and other developing countries, and disseminate them to policymakers and other decision-making processes.

The Papers

The forthcoming 11th annual international sustainable development research conference (with special streams on industrial ecology and European environmental policy) will have a special session dedicated to LCA and its relevance to sustainable development in Africa. A special call is hereby made for papers to respond to the above challenge. The papers could either be purely on case studies of LCA or LCM application, or address drivers and/or pre requisites for successful harnessing of the life cycle tools. Papers could also address the types of research, roles of knowledge networks, educational and training programmes, technical practices in various sectors, nature of public policies, and innovative financing mechanisms for promoting adoption of the tools.

The Conference Participation

The conference, organized by ERP Environment, The Research Institute for Social Sciences of the University of Tampere, Statistics Finland and ETH Zürich will bring together an international and interdisciplinary audience that will tackle many of the issues connected with sustainable development—through sharing experiences and identifying solutions relevant for Africa. A key output from this session will be concrete proposals for re-shaping NEPAD's Action Plans for the Environment Initiative and the Science & Technology Programme and hence, contribute to implementing the 10 year framework of programmes for sustainable consumption and production. Efforts are underway to provide support to all authors of the accepted papers to participate at the conference. These papers will then be further reviewed for publication as a Special Issue of the journal *Progress in Industrial Ecology – An International Journal*. Details of the conference can be accessed at www.erpenvironment.org

Abstracts

Initial abstracts of 200 words should be e-mailed to Evans Kituyi at ekituyi@uonbi.ac.ke and to Jouni Korhonen at jouni.korhonen@uta.fi by February 11, 2005.

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