

ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE ON IMPACT ASSESSMENT & WEIGHTING

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The Environmental Assurance Position:

“ The Green Building Product ecolabelling market has grown to encompass a range of new players. This is a positive step.

The outcome we are looking for is greater environmental benefit from this evolution of the green markets in Australia “

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The Objective of this Presentation:

- To clarify an effectively pathway for the evolution of green market signals.
- To highlight the inefficiencies and potential for misleading effects of single dimension rating.
- To explain some fundamental elements that future solutions need to incorporate.

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The Principle of Weighting is not accepted by the international standards for good reasons:

ISO 14025: The use of weighting and valuation under ISO 14042 is not permissible for comparative assertions between products. Furthermore, the use of a single overall score as a result of an LCA study is not supported by ISO 14 040.

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Bringing together environmental loads in a single score:

“The principle of placing environmental loads with different characteristics into a single score makes no scientific sense“

What is does is formalises an inadequate solution.

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Using social perspectives to determine weighting:

“This once again makes no scientific sense”

“There is an enormous gap between public perception and reality.. By using social opinion as a determinant of weighting puts the science back into the times of the Middle Ages.”

“The reason we have the environmental disaster challenge is because of this gap between perceptions and reality.”

Intergenerational Equity – seeks not to impose cultural imperialism..

What it does is formalises a non scientific solution and open LCA results to commercial/political and social drivers.

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Key Questions.

Presenting the LCA results:

- What is the difference between good science, good business and good politics?

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Trade Practices Act 1974 (Cth)

- Objectives of the Act
 - ▣ Competition and fair trading;
 - ▣ Consumer protection
- Informed consumers -> effective competition
- Regulation as a means to promote truthful advertising

Trade Practices Act 1974 (Cth)

- Section 52 – General prohibition of misleading and deceptive conduct
 - ▣ General prohibition against misleading or deceptive conduct
 - ▣ Wide meaning of conduct
 - ▣ No intention or malice is required
 - ▣ Half-truth (true but incomplete information) can be misleading*

Trade Practices Act 1974 (Cth)

- Section 53 – Prohibition of specific false or misleading representations
 - ▣ Making false claims that a good or service is of a particular standard, quality, value or grade;
 - ▣ Making claims that a good or service have performance characteristics, uses or benefits they do not have.

Trade Practices Act 1974 (Cth)

- Section 55/A – Engaging in conduct that is liable to mislead the public as to the nature, characteristics or the suitability their purpose of any goods or services.
 - ▣ No-one has to be misled
 - ▣ Applies to claims made to the public, e.g. Advertising, labels and packaging

