

Australian/New Zealand Standard™

**Environmental management—
Life cycle assessment—
Life cycle interpretation**



S t a n d a r d s Australia

AS/NZS ISO 14043:2001

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PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Joint Standards Australia/Standards New Zealand Committee EV-005, Life Cycle Analysis—Environmental.

This Standard is identical with and has been reproduced from ISO 14043:2000, *Environmental management—Life cycle assessment—Life cycle interpretation*.

The objective of this Standard is to provide requirements and recommendations for conducting the life cycle interpretation in life cycle assessment (LCA) or life cycle inventory analysis (LCI) studies. Specific methodologies for the life cycle interpretation phase of LCA and LCI studies are not described in this Standard.

As this Standard is reproduced from an International Standard, the following applies:

- (a) Its number does not appear on each page of text and its identity is shown only on the cover and title page.
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References to International Standards should be replaced by references to equivalent Australian or Australian/New Zealand Standards, as follows:

<i>Reference to International Standard</i>	<i>Australian/New Zealand Standard</i>
ISO	AS/NZS ISO
14040 Environmental management—Life cycle assessment—Principles and framework	14040 Environmental management—Life cycle assessment—Principles and framework
14041 Environmental management—Life cycle assessment—Goal and scope definition and life cycle inventory analysis	14041 Environmental management—Life cycle assessment—Goal and scope definition and life cycle inventory analysis
14042 Environmental management—Life cycle assessment—Life cycle impact assessment	14042 Environmental management—Life cycle assessment—Life cycle impact assessment
	AS ISO
14050 Environmental management—Vocabulary	14050 Environmental management—Vocabulary

The term ‘informative’ has been used in this Standard to define the application of the annex to which it applies. An ‘informative’ annex is only for information and guidance.

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INTRODUCTION

This International Standard on life cycle interpretation describes the final phase of the life cycle assessment (LCA) procedure, in which the results of a life cycle inventory analysis (LCI) and — if conducted — of a life cycle impact assessment (LCIA), or both, are summarized and discussed as a basis for conclusions, recommendations and decision-making in accordance with the goal and scope definition.

An LCA study begins with the goal and scope definition phase and finishes with the interpretation phase.

Life cycle interpretation is a systematic procedure to identify, qualify, check and evaluate information from the results of the LCI and/or LCIA of a product system, and to present them in order to meet the requirements of the application as described in the goal and scope of the study. The practitioner undertaking the LCA study should be in close contact with the commissioner throughout the study in order to ensure that specific questions are addressed. This communication also has to be maintained through the life cycle interpretation phase. Therefore, transparency throughout the life cycle interpretation phase is essential. Where preferences, assumptions or value-choices are involved, these need to be clearly stated by the LCA practitioner in the final report.

LCA is but one of several tools to help in decision-making, irrespective of the application, for example for information purposes (documentation of existing product systems), for improvements (implementation of changes to existing product systems) or for establishment of a new product system.

Life cycle interpretation may also demonstrate links which exist between LCA and other environmental management techniques, by rationalizing and focusing on the results. It is therefore important not only to look backward from application to the life cycle interpretation phase (and the other phases) of the LCA but also forward, e.g. to the concurrent use of other techniques.

Life cycle interpretation includes communication, to give credibility to the results of other LCA phases (namely the LCI and LCIA), in a form that is both comprehensible and useful to the decision-maker.

Whereas decisions based on technical performance, economic or social aspects are outside the LCA study, environmental issues chosen for inclusion as part of the goal and scope definition may reflect such issues.

AUSTRALIAN/NEW ZEALAND STANDARD

Environmental management — Life cycle assessment — Life cycle interpretation

1 Scope

This International Standard provides requirements and recommendations for conducting the life cycle interpretation in LCA or LCI studies.

This International Standard does not describe specific methodologies for the life cycle interpretation phase of LCA and LCI studies.

2 Normative references

The following normative documents contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this International Standard. For dated references, subsequent amendments to, or revisions of, any of these publications do not apply. However, parties to agreements based on this International Standard are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent editions of the normative documents indicated below. For undated references, the latest edition of the normative document referred to applies. Members of ISO and IEC maintain registers of currently valid International Standards.

ISO 14040:1997, *Environmental management — Life cycle assessment — Principles and framework*.

ISO 14041:1998, *Environmental management — Life cycle assessment — Goal and scope definition and inventory analysis*.

ISO 14042:2000, *Environmental management — Life cycle assessment — Life cycle impact assessment*.

ISO 14050:1998, *Environmental management — Vocabulary*.

3 Terms and abbreviated terms

3.1 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this International Standard, the terms and definitions given in ISO 14040, ISO 14041, ISO 14042 and ISO 14050 and the following apply.

3.1.1

completeness check

process of verifying whether information from the preceding phases of an LCA or an LCI study is sufficient for reaching conclusions in accordance with the goal and scope definition

3.1.2

consistency check

process of verifying that the assumptions, methods and data are consistently applied throughout the study and in accordance with the goal and scope definition

NOTE The consistency check should be performed before conclusions are reached.