General Reflection

The pre-seminar enabled the group to realize that distinct projects can follow a similar methodology in different ways, adapting the LCA method to their own project requirements. As a matter of fact, the project topic can determine which type of data is available and which processes need to be included in the system boundaries. Available data, though, are not solely responsible for a well-performed LCA. Proper assumptions have to be made and explained to result in an LCA that is reliable and useful as a tool for decision making.

Comparative LCA of Coffee Capsules and Filter Coffee (Group 13)

Mention two things (at least) about the project that was particularly good, inspiring or creative.

It was particularly interesting that the Functional Unit considered as 1 Cup of coffee was analysed deeply considering the difference in the amount of beans in each type of coffee and the difference in the litres of coffee in one cup. The fact that they chose to do their own research to collect data for this analysis even though there are available data in the Ecoinvent libraries is also inspiring, and supports the purpose of this project, to learn how to be resourceful and to see how a life cycle assessor should think and act.

Suggest two things (at least) that could be improved in the project.

The waste management part could be considered for the analysis, which they were still not sure of. This could make the analysis complete and provide better insights on both types of coffee. Also the fact that they choose that the packaging of both coffee variants will be done in the same facility. The reasoning behind this is that the transport of the products will be a major environmental factor in this case. As the packaging will not require much energy to be done, as the machinery used for this case do not require dire amounts of electricity (in comparison to processing machinery for example). Therefore it should be included that the coffee for the capsules at least should be sent to a packaging facility, to make the project more realistic.

Mention two things (at least) that you will improve in your own project, as a result of what you learned from others during the pre-seminar.

Considering the other projects presented during the pre-seminar, it was possible to assess opportunities for improvement in our own project work. Foreground and background processes, for instance, are an important part of the life cycle inventory analysis that was not addressed in our presentation. Accordingly, more research on data collection has to be done. Allocation procedures were not discussed either, which means that the life cycle inventory has to be observed more closely. Additionally, the product (metal part) details and specifications have to be added and referenced in the report.