Circularity Showcase: The Product Circularity Data Sheet (PCDS)

8th December 2020

Questions & Answers

During the Q&A session of the webinar *Circularity Showcase: The Product Circularity Data Sheet (PCDS),* we were not able to address all the questions. The following table provides an answer with more details for each question asked during the webinar.

The full recording of the webinar can be accessed via this permanent link: https://app.livestorm.co/p/ed0e6970-8eb4-470d-a4e6-818abacba8d4.

Questions	Answers
Content of the PCDS	
Can we see the actual Data Sheet? Would be interested what data actually is collected.	The Product Circularity Data Sheet (v3.2) is available on the website www.pcds.lu.
So PCDS give data about product without taking into account impact of production processes and raw materials efficiency, meaning it concentrates on final use rather than global circularity ? As far as I understand there are no LCA or environmental data in the PCDS, Am I right ?	Data in the PCDS are focused on describing the circular properties of a product. Environmental data are already provided through other product declarations. The objective is not to duplicate the efforts for the manufacturer, but rather to close an existing data gap. The PCDS is not a rating tool or an assessment tool such as LCA. It is intended to be a mechanism that allows users to measure the circularity performance of products.
Is it a 'smart' way not a 'circular' way? I feel big difficulty to understand the word circular when you use in such way.	The data in the PCDS describes the circular properties of a product in a standardized way. PCDS is a true supporting tool for the circular economy, i.e. supporting circular product design and circular business model.
Creation of the PCDS	
If data is not stored in a database, how can you be sure it stays available ? Who will be owner of the circular data? Or does ownership change during the lifecycle of the product?	The PCDS system is based on a decentralized approach. This means that there is no central database for storing the PCDS. Each manufacturer is responsible to create, maintain and store the PCDS of its products at its own premises. The PCDS should be stored on a standardized IT format to facilitate information exchange throughout the supply chain. If any transformation is done to the product (refurbishment, remanufacturing, etc.) , then a new PCDS shall be created by the organization responsible of the product.

Final products manufacturer should declare their data but they could not do so without all the supply chain companies.	Manufacturers at each stage of the supply chain should complete the PCDS. The data of PCDS are made available to any relevant stakeholders (e.g. next manufacturer in the supply chain). The structure and the content of the PCDS is designed to be integrated throughout the supply chain so it could save costs to manufacturers who are currently spending considerable efforts to collect such data.
How is the data secured? (is blockchain used?)	Each manufacturer is responsible to store the PCDS at its own premises. To ensure the authenticity of the PCDS document, a unique ID code will be generated for each PCDS. Blockchain technology is being investigated.
Use of the PCDS	
Would it make sense to connect the PCDS with BIM database ?	Two recent ISO standards (ISO 23386 & ISO 23387) are defining how to create & maintain Data Template for construction products in the context of BIM and digitalization of the sector. These standards will have a key impact on how construction manufacturers shall describe the properties of their products in a machine-readable format. In collaboration with Cobuilder, we have defined the PCDS properties in the standardized format defined by ISO 2338-6/-7, so it can be used by construction manufacturers and BIM database developers.
How does the PCDS guarantee the non-degradation of materials after deconstruction ?	Material without information is a waste. The PCDS provides valuable information in a standardized format which can facilitate the implementation of cost-effective circular business models. Indeed, the PCDS is only one key building blocks of the circular economy system. Other complementary solutions will be needed such as track & tracing systems.
Question remains if provision of information will change much in the real world ? Minimum requirements on products are more effective.	The PCDS is based on a true/false statement structure to reflect the circular properties of a product and does not set any specific requirement.
If you only want to have information on the recycled content of plastics of all parts in a product, can you limit the information to just that without having to go through 80 questions ?	All statements in the PCDS are mandatory and thus should be answered by the manufacturer. It is in the interest of the producer to reply to all statements of the PCDS as it provides relevant and useful information for future circular business models.

Use of the PCDS in the finance sector	
Being deemed as an ESG (environmental, social, governance) stock is becoming critical to investors globally. Are there any plans for the PCDS system to become part of the criteria for a firm's ability to be included as an ESG stock on any equity indices firms may be trading on? PCDS brings information for investors more than for customers?	Recent UNEP's report *Financing Circularity: Demystifying Finance for the Circular Economy* emphasized the urgent need for the standardization on product circularity data. Financial institutions pointed out the lack of uniform metrics for circularity as the number 1 barrier preventing circularity to grow. The PCDS standard could close this gap. In addition, the PCDS could play a key role in the coming EU Taxonomy, as uniform metrics with standardized data input format will be needed.
Collaboration with partners and involvement of stakeholders	
Is it in the plans to make participation on the PCDS mandatory? It is not important the tool is free. Customers used the same tool or not is the most important. How PCDS could realize all the participants in supply chain use one tool?	The completion of the PCDS remains under the responsibility of the manufacturer. However, as circular economy is getting increasing attraction by companies and governments, there is a clear market need for establishing a common language to communicate circularity data related to product. As today a clear lack of standardized system exists, the PCDS standard aims at facilitating information exchange throughout the supply chain, and thus saving costs to companies.
SMEs cost effectiveness may score low in this audience, but without SMEs the system will not work!	To achieve the systemic added value of the PCDS standard, the involvement of all manufacturers throughout the supply chain is crucial. As part of this journey, SMEs will play a key role. The data template and audit of the PCDS have been designed in a way to keep costs low and to render it inclusive for SMEs.
How is the platform 'Circular IQ' involved in the PCDS project?	During the first testing phase in Spring 2020, we collected feedback from multiple platforms, circularity ambassadors and circularity evaluators (such Cradle-to-Cradle Product Innovation Institute, Ellen Mac Arthur Foundation, UL, Madaster, etc.). Circular IQ was part of the consultation phase.
The trade war and COVID-19 have prompted reshuffling of global supply chains. Many manufacturers in Taiwan are moving their higher-end production and plants back to Taiwan. How can these firms apply PCDS to their new plants they are creating to further their commitment to the circular economy?	These companies can contact us via the website pcds.lu. So we could present them the PCDS and they could test it for their own products.

Could you imagine your PCDS and GS1 used every producer? Could you understand several formats there on this planet but it is so difficult to be used everyone?	The PCDS is setting its efforts to provide a cost-effective solution based on an international standard and using open solutions which is a key factor to allow for worldwide recognition.
Are you already collaborating with the EU, on monitoring of CE on a European level? In the Netherlands we would like to get in touch about this - not developing a monitoring system based on data on CE for the Netherlands alone, but directly creating a same standard in the EU.	We had several exchanges with the European Commission who is working on the elaboration of EU Material Passport as part of the Circular Economy Plan. We are seeking to find synergies with other initiatives. So please feel free to contact us via the website www.pcds.lu.
Standard development	
Does PCDS understand IEC/TC111 for information sharing system through supply chains?	As part of the New Work Item Proposal for the PCDS standard (NWIP) in the ISO TC 323, it is intended to establish a liaison with ISO TC 207 and IEC TC 111. The objective is to ensure a cohesion in the development of the new standards.