

Identifying best practices for evaluating sustainability in the process industry

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The SAMT project of the European Union will work together with leading industrial actors from the cement, oil, metal, water, waste and chemical industries and review the latest scientific developments within the field of sustainability assessment. In the first phase of the project, a total of 90 methods and tools were reviewed. In the second phase, the best performing methods and practices will be tested with real-life case studies.

"The industries can learn from each other by sharing information on their methods and tools to evaluate sustainability. The SAMT project is offering this possibility for process industries operating in different fields by organizing workshops and conducting case studies", says coordinator of the SAMT project Tiina Pajula from VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland.

Most of the process industry sectors are resource and energy intensive by nature. In the European Union's research programme Horizon 2020, process industries share ambitious goals in reduction of fossil-energy intensity, greenhouse gas emissions and intensity in using non-renewable, primary raw materials.

"Sustainability assessment is increasingly important within European projects and society as a whole in order to establish a basis for the environmental impact of manufacturing. As such, it is a core part of the SPIRE vision for the Sustainable Process Industries", emphasizes Søren Bowadt, Programme Officer from European Commission.

For the process industries, sustainability assessment methods are crucial for evaluating and communicating the current state and the achievement of the goals related to resource and energy efficiency. The SAMT project will provide an unbiased, independent review of the life cycle based sustainability assessment methods and tools, and the identified best practices will serve as a benchmark.

"The evaluation methods and tools are improving all the time. Neste is a leading company in production of renewable diesel and a forerunner in circular economy in production of fuels. Therefore it is important for us to thoroughly know all the impacts of our products during their [life cycle](#) - and also the methods in evaluating them", says Pekka Tuovinen, Director in Sustainability from Neste.

"In addition to consistent and innovative solutions, our customers are looking to contribute to a more sustainable future where being environmentally and socially responsible goes hand in hand with running a profitable business. Therefore, BASF has embedded sustainability in its corporate purpose, and linked this ambition directly to business factors", states Peter Saling, Director in Sustainability Methods and Sustainability Strategy of BASF. "The SAMT project is an interesting platform to learn and discuss other companies' views on this topic as well as an opportunity to exchange good practices", Saling continues.

"The linear growth model linked to linear produce-consume-and-throw consumption practices is close to its end. It is necessary to accelerate the development of a sustainable model, for more long lasting and harmonious growth. For more than ten years, sustainability assessment tools and Life Cycle Assessment approaches are helping SUEZ environnement, its partners and its customers to make more sustainable choices", says Paul-Joël Derian, Senior Vice President Research, Innovation & Performance of SUEZ environnement.

The first open SAMT workshop took place on 2nd of June at Wuppertal, Germany, where industrial actors and researchers gathered to discuss current best practices and challenges in applying sustainability assessment methods in practice. The second open workshop will be held next year, on February 17th at Bilbao, Spain, to discuss the findings of the industrial case studies.

The project will publish its results including identification of the best practices, cross-sectorial guidance and recommendations for future actions in October 2016.

More information: SAMT project: www.spire2030.eu/samt/

Provided by VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland

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