



Eco-profiles and Environmental Product Declarations of the European Plastics Manufacturers

# Polyamide 6.6 (PA6.6)

PlasticsEurope  
February 2014

# Table of Content

<b>Table of Content</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Environmental Product Declaration</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Introduction .....	3
Meta Data .....	3
Description of the Product and the Production Process.....	3
Environmental Performance .....	4
Additional Environmental and Health Information .....	4
Additional Technical Information .....	4
Additional Economic Information .....	4
Information .....	5
<b>Goal &amp; Scope</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Intended Use & Target Audience .....	6
Product Category and Declared Unit.....	6
Product and Producer Description .....	7
<b>Eco-profile – Life Cycle Inventory</b> .....	<b>10</b>
System Boundaries.....	10
Cut-off Rules.....	11
Data Quality Requirements .....	11
Calculation Rules.....	12
Life Cycle Inventory (LCI) Results .....	13
<b>Life Cycle Impact Assessment</b> .....	<b>20</b>
Input .....	20
Output .....	20
<b>Review</b> .....	<b>24</b>
Review Details .....	24
Compliance with ILCD Entry-level Requirements .....	25
Review Summary .....	27
<b>References</b> .....	<b>28</b>

# Environmental Product Declaration

## Introduction

This Environmental Product Declaration (EPD) is based upon life cycle inventory (LCI) data from PlasticsEurope's Eco-profile programme. It has been prepared according to **PlasticsEurope's Eco-profiles and Environmental Declarations – LCI Methodology and PCR for Uncompounded Polymer Resins and Reactive Polymer Precursors** (PCR version 2.0, April 2011). EPDs provide environmental performance data, but no information on the economic and social aspects which would be necessary for a complete sustainability assessment. Further, they do not imply a value judgment between environmental criteria.

This EPD describes the production of the Polyamide 6.6 (PA6.6) polymer from cradle to gate (from crude oil extraction to granules or resin at plant). **Please keep in mind that comparisons cannot be made on the level of the polymer material alone:** it is necessary to consider the full life cycle of an application in order to compare the performance of different materials and the effects of relevant life cycle parameters. This EPD is intended to be used by member companies, to support product-orientated environmental management; by users of plastics, as a building block of life cycle assessment (LCA) studies of individual products; and by other interested parties, as a source of life cycle information.

## Meta Data

Data Owner	PlasticsEurope, Product Group, Product Group Engineering Polymers
LCA Practitioner	PricewaterhouseCoopers
Programme Owner	PlasticsEurope aisbl
Programme Manager, Reviewer	DEKRA Consulting GmbH
Number of plants included in data collection	5
Representativeness	79%
Reference year	2011–2012
Year of data collection and calculation	2013
Expected temporal validity	2018
Cut-offs	No significant cut-offs
Data Quality	Very good
Allocation method	No allocation

## Description of the Product and the Production Process

Polyamides are a group of polymers characterised by a carbon chain with  $-C=O-NH-$  groups interspersed at regular intervals along it. They are commonly referred to by the generic name Nylon and are usually identified by a numbering system that indicates the number of carbon atoms between successive nitrogen atoms in the main chain. This EPD is for Polyamide 6.6 (PA6.6). Both adipic acid and HMD have 6-atom carbon chains, hence the name of PA6.6. Polycondensation occurs when a salt solution of adipic acid and HMD is heated.

## Production Process

PA6.6 is formed by polycondensation of adipic acid with the aqueous salt of hexamethylene diamine (HMDA). Adipic acid is formed through the oxidation by nitric acid of a mixture of cyclohexanol and cyclohexanone (both derived from benzene), called "olone" or ketone/alcohol oil (KA oil). The oxidation of KA oil by nitric acid renders adipic acid. KA oil is produced via two main routes: The first route is the hydrogenation of benzene to produce cyclohexane, which is then oxygenated to give cyclohexanone and cyclohexanol. The alternative route uses the reaction of benzene with propylene. This gives cumene that can be further oxygenated to phenol, giving acetone as by-product. Phenol can then be hydrogenated to form cyclohexanone and cyclohexanol. HMDA is produced either via hydrogenation of adiponitrile, itself produced through catalytic hydrocyanation of butadiene; or from propylene (via acrylonitrile). The reference flow, to which all data given in this EPD refer, is 1 kg of PA6.6 in pellet form.

## Data Sources and Allocation

The main data source was a data collection from European producers of PA6.6. Primary data on gate-to-gate production is derived from site-specific information for processes under operational control supplied by the participating companies of this study. Four different producers with plants in five European countries were participating in the primary data collection. They cover 79 % of PA6.6 production

volume in Europe (EU27) in 2011/2012. The data for the upstream supply chain until the precursors as well as relevant background data, such as energy and auxiliary material, are from the *DEAM*, *GaBi*, *PlasticsEurope* and *Ecoinvent* databases.

### Use Phase and End-of-Life Management

PA6.6 can be processed via extrusion, injection moulding and blow moulding. The main uses include fibers and engineering plastics; PA6.6 is generally not used in film applications as it cannot be bi-axially orientated. Applications range from automotive to electrical/electronic and textile uses. It should be noted that PA6 (polycaprolactam or Nylon 6) and PA6.6 are used for similar purposes. PA6.6 can be recycled mechanically or for feedstock.

### Environmental Performance

The tables below show the environmental performance indicators associated with the production of 1 kg of PA6.6.

#### Input Parameters

Indicator	Unit	Value
Non-renewable energy resources <sup>1)</sup>	MJ	138.6
• Fuel energy	MJ	107.6
• Feedstock energy	MJ	31
Renewable energy resources (biomass) <sup>1)</sup>	MJ	0.91
• Fuel energy	MJ	0.86
• Feedstock energy	MJ	0.05
Abiotic Depletion Potential		
• Elements	kg Sb eq	3.2E-06
• Fossil fuels	MJ	126.9
Renewable materials (biomass)	kg	1.3E-02
Water use	kg	2724
• for process	kg	52
• for cooling	kg	2672
<sup>1)</sup> Calculated as upper heating value (UHV)		

#### Output Parameters

Indicator	Unit	Value
GWP	kg CO <sub>2</sub> eq	6.4
ODP	g CFC-11 eq	8.3E-05
AP	g SO <sub>2</sub> eq	12.9
POCP	g Ethene eq	1.0
EP	g PO <sub>4</sub> eq	3.7
Dust/particulate matter <sup>2)</sup>	g PM10	0.8
Total particulate matter <sup>2)</sup>	g	0.8
Waste		
• Non-hazardous	kg	0.24
• Hazardous	kg	0.45
<sup>2)</sup> Including secondary PM10		

### Additional Environmental and Health Information

PA6.6 is not classified as dangerous according to CLP legislation (EC 1272/2008). It does not require a hazard label in accordance with EC Directives. Under certain circumstances (temperature >300°C), thermal degradation can give rise to toxicologically relevant HCN and CO emissions. The manufacturers of polyamides are working through PlasticsEurope, the American Chemistry Council (ACC) and other industry groups to foster product safety and to actively engage with stakeholders.

### Additional Technical Information

High tensile strength, excellent abrasion resistance, elasticity, and durability are the main characteristics of PA6.6. It is resistant to acid and alkali chemicals. It is also resistant to hydrocarbons, solvents, fuels, waxes, and oils. In addition, PA6.6 is an electrical isolator.

### Additional Economic Information

Weight reduction in automobiles is one example where PA6.6 applications contribute to reduction of carbon footprint and costs in the use phase compared with standard solutions.

## Information

### Data Owner

#### PlasticsEurope, Product Group Engineering Polymers

Avenue E van Nieuwenhuyse 4, Box 3

B-1160 Brussels, Belgium

Tel.: +32 (2) 675 32 97, Fax: +32 (2) 675 39 35

E-mail: [info@plasticseurope.org](mailto:info@plasticseurope.org).

### Programme Manager & Reviewer

#### DEKRA Consulting GmbH

This Environmental Product Declaration has been reviewed by DEKRA Consulting GmbH. It was approved according to the Product Category Rules PCR version 1.2 (2010-06) and ISO 14025:2006.

Registration number: PlasticsEurope 2013-004, validation expires on 31 December 2016 (date of next revalidation review).

## Programme Owner

### PlasticsEurope

Avenue E van Nieuwenhuyse 4, Box 3

B-1160 Brussels, Belgium

Tel.: +32 (2) 675 32 97, Fax: +32 (2) 675 39 35

E-mail: [info@plasticseurope.org](mailto:info@plasticseurope.org).

For copies of this EPD, for the underlying LCI data (Eco-profile); and for additional information, please refer to <http://www.plasticseurope.org/>.

### References

- PlasticsEurope: Eco-profiles and environmental declarations – LCI methodology and PCR for uncompounded polymer resins and reactive polymer precursors (version 2.0, April 2011)
- Cover image with kind permission by PlasticsEurope.

# Goal & Scope

## Intended Use & Target Audience

➤ *Eco-profiles (LCIs) and EPDs from this programme are intended to be used as »cradle-to-gate« building blocks of life cycle assessment (LCA) studies of defined applications or products. LCA studies considering the full life cycle (»cradle-to-grave«) of an application or product allow for comparative assertions to be derived. It is essential to note that comparisons cannot be made at the level of the polymer or its precursors. In order to compare the performance of different materials, the whole life cycle and the effects of relevant life cycle parameters must be considered.*

PlasticsEurope Eco-profiles and EPDs represent polymer production systems with a defined output. They can be used as modular building blocks in LCA studies. However, these integrated industrial systems cannot be disaggregated further into single unit processes, such as polymerisation, because this would neglect the interdependence of the elements, e.g. the internal recycling of feedstocks and precursors between different parts of the integrated production sites.

PlasticsEurope Eco-profiles and EPDs are prepared in accordance with the stringent ISO 14040–44 requirements. Since the system boundary is “cradle-to-gate”, however, their respective reference flows are disparate, namely referring to a broad variety of polymers and precursors. This implies that, in accordance with ISO 14040–44, a direct comparison of Eco-profiles is impossible. While ISO 14025, Clause 5.2.2 does allow EPDs to be used in comparison, PlasticsEurope EPDs are derived from Eco-profiles, i.e. with the same »cradle-to-gate« system boundaries.

*As a consequence, a direct comparison of Eco-profiles or EPDs makes no sense because 1 kg of different polymers are not functionally equivalent.*

Once a full life cycle model for a defined polymer application among several functionally equivalent systems is established, and only then, can comparative assertions be derived. The same goes for EPDs, for instance, of building product where PlasticsEurope EPDs can serve as building blocks.

Eco-profiles and EPDs are intended for use by the following target audiences:

- member companies, to support product-orientated environmental management and continuous improvement of production processes (benchmarking);
- downstream users of plastics, as a building block of life cycle assessment (LCA) studies of plastics applications and products; and
- other interested parties, as a source of life cycle information.

## Product Category and Declared Unit

### Product Category

The core product category is defined as **uncompounded polymer resins, or reactive polymer precursors**. This product category is defined “at gate” of the polymer or precursor production and is thus fully within the scope of PlasticsEurope as a federation. In some cases, it may be necessary to include one or several additives in the Eco-profile to represent the polymer or precursor “at gate”. For instance, some polymers may require a heat stabi-

liser, or a reactive precursor may require a flame retardant. This special case is distinguished from a subsequent compounding step conducted by a third-party downstream user (outside PlasticsEurope's core scope).

### Functional Unit and Declared Unit

The default Functional Unit and Declared Unit of PlasticsEurope Eco-profiles and EPDs are (unless otherwise specified<sup>1</sup>):

*1 kg of PA6.6 "at gate" (production site output) representing a European industry production average, in pellet form.*

## Product and Producer Description

### Product Description

Polyamide 6.6 (PA6.6) is a thermoplastic polymer.

- IUPAC name: Poly[imino(1,6-dioxo-1,6-hexanediyl) imino-1,6-hexanediyl]
- CAS no. 32131-17-2
- Chemical formula:  $-(C_{12}H_{22}N_2O_2)_n-$
- Density: 1.14 g/cm<sup>3</sup>

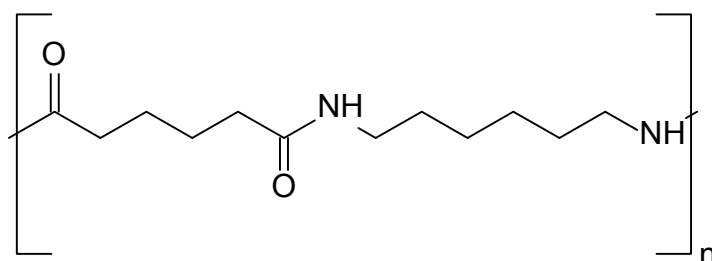


Figure 1: Structure of the repeated unit in PA6.6

PA6.6, also known as Nylon 6.6, belongs to the family of polyamides. Its base structure is a twelve-carbon amide function created through polycondensation of adipic acid and hexamethylene diamine (HMD). Hydrogen bonds between the hydrocarbon chains explain the excellent mechanical and physical properties of PA6.6 (see below). It is noteworthy that the relative number of amide groups – expressed, for example, as methylene to amide group ratio – is identical for PA6 and PA6.6 polymers (equal to 5).

First synthesised in the 1930s, PA6.6 is of the earliest synthetic plastics ever made: the first PA6.6 consumer products were put to market in 1939. By comparison, polyamide 6 was on the market in 1940. It has many applications thanks to its mechanical and physical properties: high tensile strength, excellent abrasion resistance, elasticity, and durability. For the industrial production of PA6.6, polycondensation of a salt of adipic acid and HMD is used.

<sup>1</sup> Exceptions can occur when reporting Eco-profiles of, for instance, process energy, such as on-site steam, or conversion processes, such as extrusion.

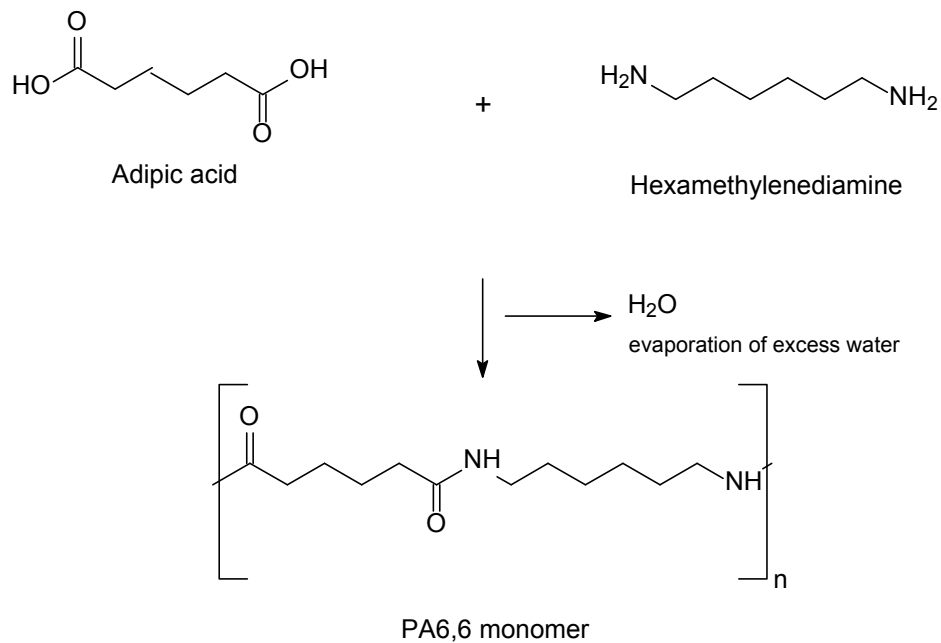


Figure 2: Production of PA6.6 through polycondensation of adipic acid and HMD

Adipic acid is synthesised from KA oil, itself produced from benzene through two possible routes:

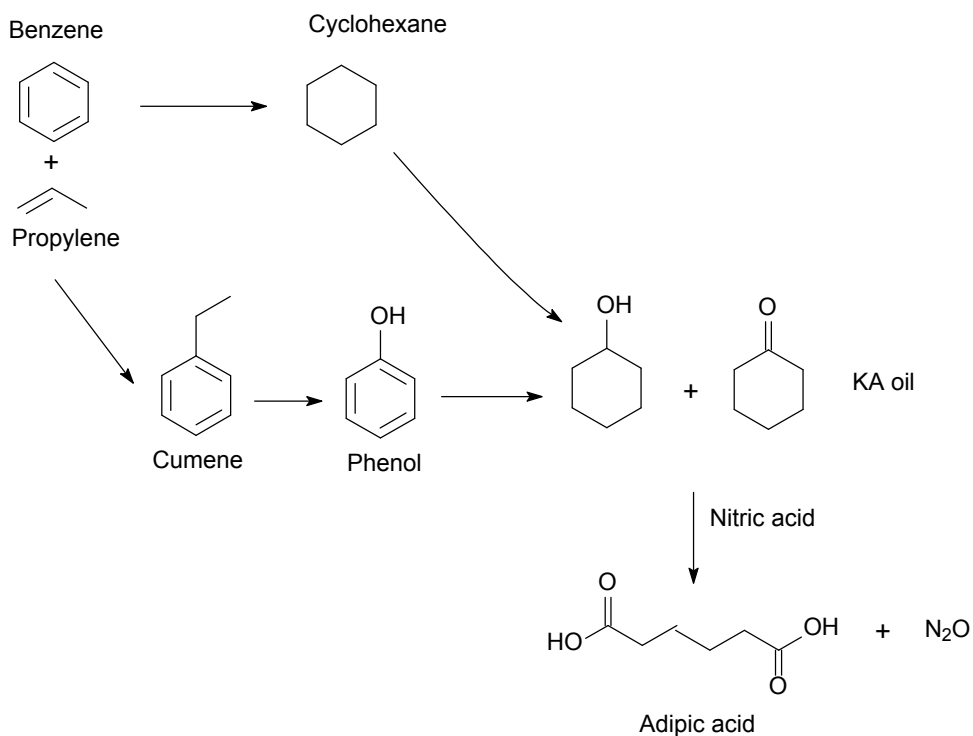


Figure 3: Overview of the synthesis of adipic acid



It should be noted that the reaction of KA oil with nitric acid results in the release of nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), a potent greenhouse gas (GHG). Abatement of N<sub>2</sub>O emissions is a major interest of adipic acid producers.

Hexamethylene diamine is produced through the hydrogenation of adiponitrile, synthesised from butadiene through hydrocyanation.

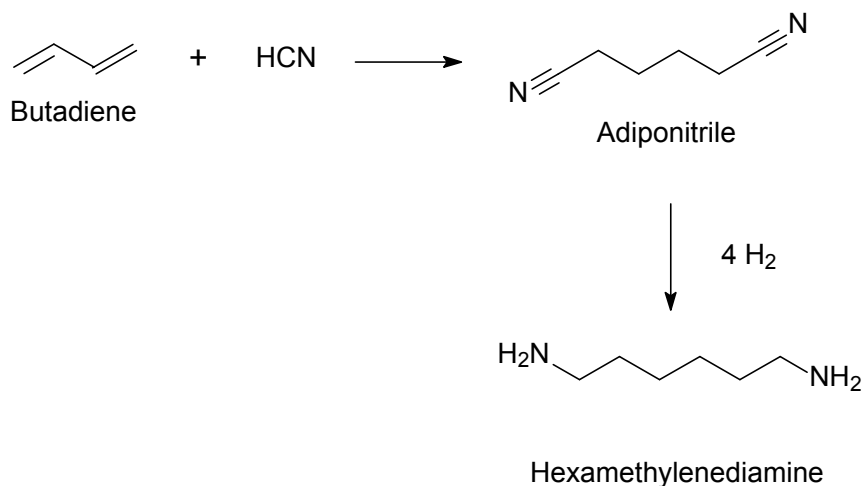


Figure 4: Overview of the synthesis of HMD

The processes described here, including supplementary materials (catalysts for instance), energy and utilities needed, are referred to as “foreground processes” as they are under direct management control. Related upstream processes (raw materials/chemicals production, fuels production, etc) are referred to as “background processes”.

### Producer Description

PlasticsEurope Eco-profiles and EPDs represent European industry averages within the scope of PlasticsEurope as the issuing trade federation. Hence they are not attributed to any single producer, but rather to the European plastics industry as represented by PlasticsEurope’s membership and the production sites participating in the Eco-profile data collection. The following companies contributed data to this Eco-profile:

- BASF
- DuPont
- Radici
- Solvay

# Eco-profile – Life Cycle Inventory

## System Boundaries

PlasticsEurope Eco-profiles and EPDs refer to the production of polymers as a cradle-to-gate system (Figure 5).

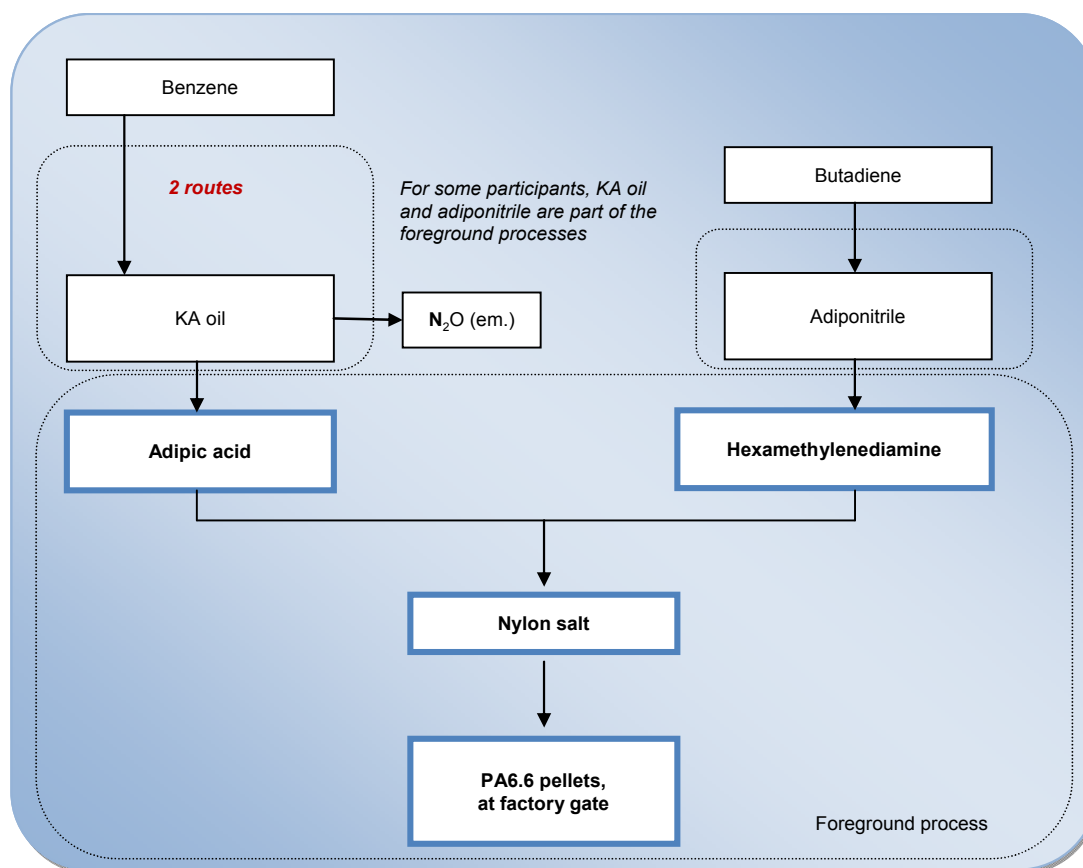


Figure 5: Cradle-to-gate system boundaries

## Technological Reference

The production processes were modelled using specific values from primary data collection at site, representing the specific technology for the four companies. The LCI data represent technology in use in the defined production region employed by participating producers. The considered participants cover all producers in Europe in 2011–2012, so the technological coverage is understood as representative. Primary data were used for all foreground processes (under operational control) complemented with secondary data from background processes (under indirect management control). In the EU27+2 region relevant here, the total PA6.6 production volume is between 509kt (Western Europe) and 589kt (Greater Europe, source: PCI Nylon GmbH, respectively); an estimate by Radici of 529kt (EU+EFTA) was assumed as a basis, resulting in a coverage of 79% represented by the participants of this study.

## Temporal Reference

The LCI data for production was collected as 12 month averages representing the years 2010–2012, to compensate seasonal influence of data. The overall reference year for this Eco-profile is 2011-2012 with a maximal temporal validity until 2018.

## **Geographical Reference**

Primary production data for PA6.6 production is from four different suppliers in the EU. Fuel and energy inputs in the system reflect average European conditions and whenever applicable, site specific conditions were applied, to reflect representative situations. Therefore, the study results are intended to be applicable within EU boundaries and in order to be applied in other regions adjustments might be required. PA6.6 imported into Europe was not considered in this Eco-profile.

## **Cut-off Rules**

In the foreground processes all relevant flows were considered, trying to avoid any cut-off of material and energy flows. At least 95 % of mass and energy of the input and output flows were covered and 98 % of their environmental relevance (according to expert judgment) was considered, hence an influence of cut-offs less than 2 % on the total is expected.

## **Data Quality Requirements**

### **Data Sources**

Eco-profile developed by PlasticsEurope use average data representative of the respective foreground production process, both in terms of technology and market share. The primary data are derived from site specific information for processes under operational control supplied by the participating member companies of PlasticsEurope (see Producer Description).

All relevant background data, such as energy and auxiliary materials, are taken from the *DEAM*, *GaBi*, PlasticsEurope and *Ecoinvent 2.2* databases. In particular, *GaBi* datasets for adipic acid and HMDA were used where no company-specific data were available. Most of the background data and the pertinent documentation are publicly available. The dominance analysis (Table 18) showed that the contribution of these background datasets on impact indicators is lower than 10% (except for abiotic depletion, see Table 18).

### **Relevance**

With regard to the goal and scope of this Eco-profile, the collected primary data of foreground processes are of high relevance.

### **Representativeness**

The participating companies represent about 79 % of PA6.6 production in Europe in 2010–2012. The selected background data can be regarded as representative for the intended purpose, as it is average data and not in the focus of the analysis.

### **Consistency**

To ensure consistency only primary data of the same level of detail and background data from the *DEAM*, PlasticsEurope and *Ecoinvent* databases were used. While building up the model, cross-checks concerning the plausibility of mass and energy flows were continuously conducted. The methodological framework is consistent throughout the whole model as the same methodological principles are used both in foreground and background system.

## **Reliability**

Data reliability ranges from measured to estimated data. Data of foreground processes provided directly by producers were predominantly measured. Data of relevant background processes were measured or derived from literature; qualified estimates were used for some flows.

## **Completeness**

Primary data used for the gate-to-gate production of PA6.6 covers all related flows in accordance with the cut-off criteria. In this way all relevant flows were quantified and data is considered complete.

## **Precision and Accuracy**

As the relevant foreground data is primary data or modelled based on primary information sources of the owner of the technology, better precision is not reachable within this goal and scope. Due to the relevance of N<sub>2</sub>O emissions – and their considerable variation – for the final GWP results (see Table 19), the European average reported here has an uncertainty margin of approximately  $\pm 10\%$  on the GWP.

## **Reproducibility**

All data and information used are either documented in this report or they are available from the processes and process plans designed within the *TEAM*<sup>®</sup> software. The reproducibility is given for internal use since the owners of the technology provided the data and the models are stored and available in a database. Sub-systems are modelled by ‘state of art’ technology using data from a publicly available and internationally used database. It is worth noting that for external audiences, it may be the case that full reproducibility in any degree of detail will not be available for confidentiality reasons. However, experienced experts would easily be able to recalculate and reproduce suitable parts of the system as well as key indicators.

## **Data Validation**

Primary data collected from project partners was validated by the data providers in an iterative process several times, using existing data from published sources and expert knowledge. In particular, the data for N<sub>2</sub>O emissions have been assessed to be based on recent measurements and dedicated reports; their plausibility has been checked. The background information from the databases is updated regularly and validated through regular feedback by users worldwide.

## **Life Cycle Model**

The study has been performed with the LCA software *TEAM*<sup>®</sup>. The associated database complies with ISO 14040/44 requirements. Due to confidentiality reasons details on software modelling and methods used cannot be shown here.

## **Calculation Rules**

### **Vertical Averaging**

When modelling and calculating average Eco-profiles from the collected individual LCI datasets, vertical averages were calculated (Figure 6).

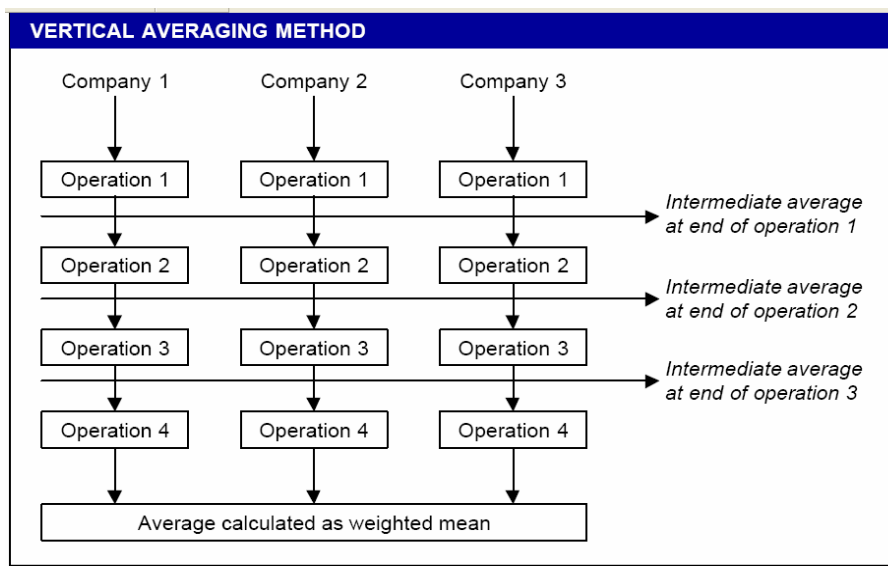


Figure 6: Vertical Averaging (source: Eco-profile of high volume commodity phthalate esters, ECPI European Council for Plasticisers and Intermediates, 2001)

### Allocation Rules

Production processes in chemical and plastics industry are usually multi-functional systems, i.e. they have not one, but several valuable product and co-product outputs. Wherever possible, allocation should be avoided by expanding the system to include the additional functions related to the co-products. Often, however, avoiding allocation is not feasible in technical reality; as alternative stand-alone processes do not exist in reality or alternative technologies show different technical performance and product quality output. In such cases, the aim of allocation is to find a suitable partitioning parameter so that the inputs and outputs of the system can be assigned to the specific product sub-system under consideration. Within the scope of this Eco-profile, allocation in the foreground system was avoided.

## Life Cycle Inventory (LCI) Results

### Formats of LCI Dataset

The Eco-profile is provided in three electronic formats:

- As input/output table in Excel®
- As XML document in EcoSpold format ([www.ecoinvent.org](http://www.ecoinvent.org))
- As XML document in ILCD format (<http://lct.jrc.ec.europa.eu>)

Key results are summarised below.

### Energy Demand

As a key indicator on the inventory level, the **primary energy demand** (system input) of 139.5 MJ/kg indicates the cumulative energy requirements at the resource level, accrued along the entire process chain (system boundaries), quantified as gross calorific value (upper heating value, UHV).

As a measure of the share of primary energy incorporated in the product, and hence indicating a recovery potential, the **energy content in the polymer** (system output), quantified as the gross calorific value (UHV), is approximately 35 MJ/kg.

Table 1: *Primary energy demand (system boundary level) per 1kg PA6.6*

<b>Primary Energy Demand</b>	<b>Value [MJ]</b>
Energy content in polymer (energy recovery potential, quantified as gross calorific value of polymer)	34.9
Process energy (quantified as difference between primary energy demand and energy content of polymer)	104.6
<b>Total primary energy demand</b>	<b>139.5</b>

Consequently, the difference ( $\Delta$ ) between primary energy input and energy content in polymer output is a measure of **process energy** which may be either dissipated as waste heat or recovered for use within the system boundaries. Useful energy flows leaving the system boundaries were removed during allocation.

Table 2 shows how the total energy input (primary energy demand) is used as fuel or feedstock. Fuel use means generating process energy, whereas feedstock use means incorporating hydrocarbon resources into the polymer. Note that some feedstock input may still be valorised as energy; furthermore, process energy requirements may also be affected by exothermal or endothermal reactions of intermediate products. Hence, there is a difference between the feedstock energy input and the energy content of the polymer (measurable as its gross calorific value). Considering this uncertainty of the exact division of the process energy as originating from either fuels or feedstocks, as well as the use of average data (secondary data) in the modelling with different country-specific grades of crude oil and natural gas, the feedstock energy has 20% of uncertainty.

Table 2: Analysis by primary energy resources (system boundary level), expressed as energy and/or mass (as applicable) per 1kg PA6.6

Primary energy resource input	Total Energy Input [MJ]	Total Mass Input [kg]	Feedstock Energy Input [MJ]	Fuel Energy Input [MJ]
Coal	5.0	0.18	0.0	5.0
Oil	44.7	0.99	17.1*	27.7
Natural gas	79.4	1.5	17.8*	61.6
Lignite	1.0	0.07	0.0	1.0
Nuclear	8.5	1.5E-05	0.0	8.5
Biomass	0.18	9.8E-03	0.0	0.18
Hydro	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.43
Solar	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.10
Geothermics	0.01	0.0	0.0	0.0
Waves	0.00	0.0	0.0	0.0
Wood	0.06	3.2E-03	0.06	0.0
Wind	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.13
Other renewable fuels	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Sub-total renewable</b>	<b>0.91</b>	<b>0.01</b>	<b>0.06</b>	<b>0.86</b>
<b>Sub-total Non-renewable</b>	<b>138.6</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>34.8</b>	<b>103.8</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>139.5</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>34.9</b>	<b>104.6</b>

\*) Based on expert judgment

Table 3 shows that nearly all of the primary energy demand is from non-renewable resources. Since the scope of PlasticsEurope and their member companies is the polymer production, Table 4 analyses the types of useful energy inputs in the polymerisation: electricity has a minor contribution, whereas the majority is thermal energy (heat). This represents the share of the energy requirement that is under operational control of the polymer producer. Accordingly, Table 5 shows that the majority (93%) of the primary energy demand is accounted for by precursor production. Finally, Table 6 provides a more detailed overview of the key processes along the production system, their contribution to primary energy demand and how this is sourced from the respective energy resources. This puts the predominant contribution of the production into perspective with the precursors adipic acid and HMDA. In order to analyse these upstream operations more closely, please refer to the Eco-profiles of the respective precursors. It should be noted, however, that the LCI tables in the annex account for the entire cradle-to-gate primary energy demand of the PA6.6 system.

Table 3: Primary energy demand by renewability per 1kg PA6.6

Fuel/energy input type	Value [MJ]	%
Renewable energy resources	0.9	1%
Non-renewable energy resources	138.6	99%
<b>Total</b>	<b>139.5</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4: Analysis by type of useful energy (PA6.6 production – foreground process) per 1kg PA6.6

Type of useful energy in process input	Value [MJ]
Electricity	4
Heat, thermal energy	26
Other types of useful energy (relevant contributions to be specified)	0
<b>Total (for selected key process (foreground process))</b>	<b>30</b>

Table 5: Contribution to primary energy demand (dominance analysis) per 1kg PA6.6

Contribution to Primary Energy per segment	Value [MJ]	%
Adipic acid	61.7	44%
HMDA	68.3	49%
PA66 salt	1.0	1%
Polymerisation of PA66 – of which: natural gas use	8.5 (6.2)	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>139.5</b>	<b>100%</b>



Table 6: Contribution of life cycle stages to total primary energy demand (gross calorific values) per 1kg PA6.6

Total Pri- mary Energy [MJ]	Adipic acid	HMDA	Others	Utilities	Electricity	Thermal	Transports (PA66 salt, PA66)
Coal	3.0	1.1	2.2E-03	0.35	0.35	0.10	0.02
Oil	24.4	19.9	4.7E-03	0.14	0.05	0.03	0.14
Natural gas	30.8	42.0	0.01	0.24	0.21	6.13	0.01
Lignite	0.45	0.34	1.7E-03	0.24	0.00	6.6E-09	0.02
Nuclear	2.69	4.4	2.9E-03	0.36	0.67	0.31	0.02
Biomass	0.09	0.07	1.3E-04	0.01	0.0	0.01	6.7E-04
Hydro	0.15	0.21	3.5E-04	0.07	0.0	0.0	1.5E-03
Solar	0.04	0.06	6.8E-07	8.9E-05	0.0	0.0	1.3E-05
Geothermics	2.0E-03	4.6E-03	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Waves	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Wood	0.04	5.3E-03	1.5E-04	0.02	7.3E-07	7.6E-10	7.9E-04
Wind	0.05	0.08	4.7E-05	5.9E-03	0.0	0.0	6.1E-04
Other renewable fuels	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>61.7</b>	<b>68.3</b>	<b>2.2E-02</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>0.21</b>

## Water Consumption

In the scope of this project, it was not feasible anymore to implement the emerging methodology for water inventory. Therefore, only a differentiation by source is provided (Table 7). Note that this gross water consumption data cannot be used for purposes of water footprinting.

Table 7: Gross water resources table per 1kg PA6.6

Source	Process water [kg]	Cooling water [kg]	Total [kg]
Public supply	3	41	44
River/canal	2	1027	1030
Sea	1.3	0	1.3
Unspecified	2	30	32
Lake	29	0	29
Well	15	17	32
Totals	<b>52</b>	<b>1116</b>	<b>1168</b>
Turbinized water (unspecified source, directly released to environment)			<b>1555</b>

## Air Emission Data

Table 8 shows a few selected air emissions which are commonly reported and used as key performance indicators; for a full inventory of air emissions, please refer to the complete LCI table in the annex of this report.

Table 8: Selected air emissions per 1kg PA6.6

Air emissions	kg
Carbon dioxide, fossil (CO <sub>2</sub> , fossil)	4.8
Carbon monoxide (CO)	4.4E-03
Sulphur dioxide (SO <sub>2</sub> )	6.6E-03
Nitrogen oxides (NO <sub>x</sub> )	9.5E-03
Nitrous Oxide (N <sub>2</sub> O)	4.0E-03
Particulate matter ≤ 10 µm (PM 10)	8.5E-04

## Wastewater Emissions

Table 9 shows a few selected wastewater emissions which are commonly reported and used as key performance indicators; for a full inventory of wastewater emissions, please refer to the complete LCI table in the annex of this report.

Table 9: Selected water emissions per 1kg PA6.6

Water emissions	kg
Biological oxygen demand after 5 days (BOD 5)	4.1E-03
Chemical oxygen demand (COD)	5.3E-03
Total organic carbon (TOC)	1.4E-03

## Solid Waste

Table 10: Solid waste generation per 1kg PA6.6 (key foreground process level)

Waste for –	Incineration kg	Landfill kg	Recovery kg	Unspecified kg	Total kg
Non-hazardous	3.8E-04	0	6.0E-04	2.4E-01	0.24
Hazardous	4.5E-01	0	4.7E-05	6.2E-04	0.45
Unspecified	2.7E-04	5.0E-02	0	4.4E-02	0.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.45</b>	<b>5.0E-02</b>	<b>6.5E-04</b>	<b>0.28</b>	<b>0.78</b>

# Life Cycle Impact Assessment

The reported impact categories were calculated with the CML method; please refer to the Methodology document (PLASTICSEUROPE 2011) for details.

## Input

### Natural Resources

Table 11: Abiotic Depletion Potential per 1kg PA6.6

Natural resources	Value
Abiotic Depletion Potential (ADP). elements [kg Sb eq], ultimate reserves	3.2E-06
Abiotic Depletion Potential (ADP). fossil fuels [MJ], lower heating value	126.9

## Output

### Climate Change

Table 12: Global Warming Potential (100 years) per 1kg PA6.6

Climate change	kg CO <sub>2</sub> eq.
Global Warming Potential (GWP)	6.4

### Acidification

Table 13: Acidification Potential per 1kg PA6.6

Acidification of soils and water bodies	g SO <sub>2</sub> eq.
Acidification Potential (AP)	12.9

### Eutrophication

Table 14: Eutrophication Potential per 1kg PA6.6

Eutrophication of soils and water bodies	g PO <sub>4</sub> <sup>3-</sup> eq.
Eutrophication Potential (EP), total	3.7

## Ozone Depletion

Table 15: Ozone Depletion Potential per 1kg PA6.6

	<b>g CFC-11 eq.</b>
Ozone Depletion Potential (ODP)	8.3E-05

## Summer Smog

Table 16: Photochemical Ozone Creation Potential per 1kg PA6.6

	<b>g Ethene eq.</b>
Photochemical Ozone Creation Potential (POCP)	1.0

## Dust & Particulate Matter

Table 17: PM10 emissions per 1kg PA6.6

<b>Particulate matter</b>	<b>g PM10 eq.</b>
Particulate matter $\leq 10 \mu\text{m}$ . total	0.8
Particulate matter $\leq 10 \mu\text{m}$ (direct emissions)	0.0
Particulate matter $\leq 10 \mu\text{m}$ . secondary	0.8

## Dominance Analysis

Table 18 shows the main contributions to the results presented above. An average based on the weighted mean from the different technologies of the participating producers is used. In all analysed environmental impact categories, adipic acid and HDMA contribute more than 60% of the total impact. However, utilities contribute 36% to ADP, elements. The use of high-quality data, especially for HMDA and adipic acid, is therefore critical to the environmental profile of PA6.6.

Table 18: Dominance analysis of impacts per 1kg PA6.6

	Total Pri- mary En- ergy [MJ]	ADP Ele- ments [kg Sb eq.]	ADP Fossil [MJ]	GWP [kg CO <sub>2</sub> eq.]	AP [g SO <sub>2</sub> eq.]	EP [g PO <sub>4</sub> <sup>3-</sup> eq.]	POCP [g Ethene eq.]
Adipic acid	43%	53%	45%	52%	57%	68%	56%
HMDA	51%	7%	49%	41%	36%	21%	38%
PA66 salt and PA66	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Other chemicals	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Utilities	1%	39%	1%	1%	3%	8%	2%
Electricity	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Thermal Energy	4%	0%	5%	4%	1%	0%	2%
Transports (PA66 salt, PA66)	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

### Comparison of the Present Eco-profile with its Previous Version

Table 19 compares the present results with the previous version of the Eco-profile, showing a significant improvement in the environmental profile of PA6.6 between the two data collections. Note that for the purposes of this comparison, updated impact assessment models (2013) were applied to the LCI data for 2005 – due to updated characterisation factors, this results in some small differences compared to impact indicators as reported in 2005.

Table 19: Comparison of the present Eco-profile with its previous version (2005/2013)

Environmental Impact Categories	Eco-profile PA6.6 (2005)	Eco-profile PA6.6 (2013)	Difference
Gross primary energy from resources [MJ]	133.4	139.5	5%
Abiotic Depletion Potential (ADP), elements [kg Sb eq.]	2.8E-06	3.2E-06	14%
Abiotic Depletion Potential (ADP), fossil fuels [MJ]	132.2	126.9	–4%
Global Warming Potential (GWP) [kg CO <sub>2</sub> eq.]	7.99	6.44	–19%
Acidification Potential (AP) [g SO <sub>2</sub> eq.]	29.2	12.9	–56%
Eutrophication Potential (EP) [g PO <sub>4</sub> <sup>3-</sup> eq.]	6.1	3.7	–39%
Ozone Depletion Potential (ODP) [g CFC-11 eq.]	n/a	8.3E-05	n/a
Photochemical Ozone Creation Pot. (POCP) [g Ethene eq.]	1.4	1.0	–25%

The gross primary energy and – correlated – the ADP, fossil fuels, are approximately stable. The reduction in GWP is due to an optimisation of energy efficiency, leading to a reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by –28%. The extent of progress which the industry has made in eliminating emissions greenhouse gas nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O, laughing gas), however, cannot be derived from the comparative analysis: among the reasons for this update of the Eco-profile was that N<sub>2</sub>O emissions attributed to PA6.6 were suspected to be flawed; indeed they were found to be considerably higher than in the 2005 version, averaging around 4 g rather than less than 1 g per kg PA6.6 (see Table 8). Due to this correction, the overall reduction of GWP is somewhat less than 20%. Significant reductions of N<sub>2</sub>O emissions seem rather unlikely as elimination of formation during nitric and adipic acid (stoichiometrically, in case of the latter only) production is expected to be near the limits of technical feasibility. It should also

be noted that the previous version of the Eco-profile provided a less detailed life cycle inventory (LCI) so that comparisons of some indicators, in particular ODP and POCP, are limited or even impossible.

# Review

## Review Details

The project included regular milestone meetings with representatives of all participating producers and PlasticsEurope as system operator. The reviewer participated in these meetings. In addition, a review meeting between the LCA practitioner and the reviewer was held, including a model and database review, and spot checks of data and calculations.

Specific comments on the results include:

- The nitrous oxide (laughing gas, N<sub>2</sub>O) emission abatement in terms of technologies used, their elimination efficiency, and degree of use was subject to review and received due attention. It became apparent that adoption of such technologies is at quite different stages across industry, in some cases being very recent developments, which may partly explain the disparities in reported N<sub>2</sub>O levels. Further, the monitoring of N<sub>2</sub>O levels varied from continuous to intermittent, adding some uncertainty to reported levels in a few cases. Due to the substantial variation of reported N<sub>2</sub>O emissions, particular attention was on cross-checking high and low values. Also, an effort was made to confirm the reported N<sub>2</sub>O emission with reports under the ETS scheme. Hence, the average N<sub>2</sub>O emission and its range found here appear reliable – this, however, confirms suspicions that previously reported levels (2005) were probably substantially too low.
- The differentiation of the water inventory by source and destination (allowing for a water balance and supporting water footprints) should be included in future updates.



## Compliance with ILCD Entry-level Requirements

Table 20: General review reporting items (reproduced with kind permission of JRC)

REVIEW REPORTING			
General information			
Data set name	Polyamide 6.6 (PA6.6)		
Data set UUID and version number	n/a		
Data set locator (e.g. Permanent URI, URL, contact point, or database name and version, etc.)	n/a		
Data set owner	PlasticsEurope aisbl		
Review commissioner(s)	PlasticsEurope aisbl		
Reviewer name(s) and affiliation(s), contact	Dr.-Ing. Ivo Mersiowsky, DEKRA Consulting GmbH		
Review type applied	Independent external		
Date of review completion (DD/MM/YYYY)	13/12/2013		
Reviewed against / Compliance system name	ILCD Data Network – Entry-level requirements		
Reviewer assessment:			
Aspect	Yes	No	Comments
Quality compliance (ISO 14040 & 14044) fulfilled (see Table 21)	X		
Method compliance (ISO 14040 & 14044) fulfilled and documented in data set	X		
Nomenclature compliance (see Table 22) fulfilled	X		
Documentation compliance (see Table 22) fulfilled	X		
Review compliance (Independent external review report) fulfilled	X		
Compliant with ISO 14040 & 14044	X		
Overall compliant with compliance system	X		
Date, location, reviewer signature	13 December 2013, Stuttgart, Germany		

**Table 21:** *Specific/detailed review reporting items for LCI data set: quality compliance (ISO 14040 & 14044; reproduced with kind permission of JRC)*

ITEMs	Comments
Time-related coverage/representativeness: “age of data and the minimum length of time over which data should be collected” “qualitative assessment of the degree to which the data set reflects the true population of interest”	<b>Very Good</b> Foreground: 12 month averages representing the years 2010–2012. Background: 2010–2012 (tbc based on list of secondary datasets). Maximum temporal validity until 2018. (p.10)
Geographical coverage/representativeness: “geographical area from which data for unit processes should be collected to satisfy the goal of the study” “qualitative assessment of the degree to which the data set reflects the true population of interest”	<b>Very Good</b> European production average (data from four producers with five sites in four different European countries; supplemented by average from literature). (p.11)
Technology coverage/representativeness: “specific technology or technology mix” “qualitative assessment of the degree to which the data set reflects the true population of interest”	<b>Very Good</b> Technology mix representing European production (see above). 79 % of the European production capacity (EU-27) in 2010–2012. (p.10)
Precision: “measure of the variability of the data values for each data expressed (e.g. variance)”	<b>n/a</b> Relevant foreground data is primary data, or modelled based on primary information sources of the owners of the technologies. See Uncertainty below for explanation of “n/a” rating. (p. 11)
Completeness: “percentage of flow that is measured or estimated”; assessed on level of process	<b>Very good</b> Primary data used for the gate-to-gate production covered all relevant flows in accordance with the cut-off criteria, i.e. at least 95 % of mass and energy of the input and output flows, and 98 % of their environmental relevance (according to expert judgment) were considered. (p.11)
Consistency: “qualitative assessment of whether the study methodology is applied uniformly to the various components of the analysis”	<b>Very Good</b> Primary data of the same level of detail and background data from DEAM and other databases were used. While building up the model, cross-checks ensured the plausibility of mass and energy flows. Due to the relevance of background datasets from different databases and the inclusion of literature data, the overall consistency rating is reduced. (p.11)
Sources of the data; Appropriateness of use primary/secondary data source	The main data source was a primary data collection from European producers, providing site-specific gate-to-gate production data for processes under operational control of the participating companies. Data for the upstream supply chain until the precursors are taken from several databases (DEAM, PlasticsEurope, GaBi,ecoinvent). (p.11)
Uncertainty of the information (e.g. data, models and assumptions).	Variation of single data was not recorded. Variation of the model/dataset not applicable due to vertical average of production lines and technologies. Hence, Precision above was rated “n/a”. (p.9–10) Critical elements within the model include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>level of N<sub>2</sub>O emissions (based on effectiveness and use of abatement technologies as well as completeness of monitoring)</li> </ul>

Table 22

*Specific/detailed review reporting items for LCI data set: nomenclature and documentation  
(reproduced with kind permission of JRC)*

ITEMs	Comments
<b>Nomenclature</b>	
Correctness and consistency of applied nomenclature	Yes
<b>Documentation</b>	
Appropriateness of documentation extent (see document "Documentation of LCA data sets")	Yes
Appropriateness of documentation form (ILCD Format)	Yes

## Review Summary

This Eco-profile is considered a representative, reliable and high-quality quality representation of PA6.6 production in Europe. Compared with the previous version, a correction of the N<sub>2</sub>O emissions was substantiated by the new survey; an uncertainty margin of approximately  $\pm 10\%$  on the GWP remains. The critical review confirms that this Eco-profile adheres to the rules set forth in the PlasticsEurope's Eco-profiles and Environmental Declarations – LCI Methodology and PCR for Uncompounded Polymer Resins and Reactive Polymer Precursors (PCR version 2.0, April 2011).

## Reviewer Name and Institution

Dr.-Ing. Ivo Mersiowsky, Business Line Manager Sustainability Leadership, DEKRA Consulting GmbH, Stuttgart, Germany

## References

- BOUSTEAD 2005 Boustead, I., Eco-profiles of the European Plastics Industry: POLYAMIDE 66, Plastics Europe, March 2005
- EYERER 1996 Ganzheitliche Bilanzierung – Werkzeug zum Planen und Wirtschaften in Kreisläufen, 1996
- GUINÉE ET AL. 2001 Guinée, J. et. al. Handbook on Life Cycle Assessment - Operational Guide to the ISO Standards. Centre of Environmental Science, Leiden University (CML); The Netherlands, 2001.
- GUINÉE ET AL. 2002 Handbook on Life Cycle Assessment: An operational Guide to the ISO Standards; Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002.
- HEIJUNGS 1992 Heijungs, R., J. Guinée, G. Huppes, R.M. Lankreijer, H.A. Udo de Haes, A. Wegener Sleeswijk, A.M.M. Ansems, P.G. Eggels, R. van Duin, H.P. de Goede, 1992: Environmental Life Cycle Assessment of products. Guide and Backgrounds. Centre of Environmental Science (CML), Leiden University, Leiden.
- HUIJBREGTS 1999 Huijbregts, M., 1999b: Life cycle impact assessment of acidifying and eutrophying air pollutants. Calculation of equivalency factors with RAINS-LCA. Interfaculty Department of Environmental Science, Faculty of Environmental Science, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Forthcoming.
- HUIJBREGTS 2000 Huijbregts, M.A.J., 2000. Priority Assessment of Toxic Substances in the frame of LCA. Time horizon dependency of toxicity potentials calculated with the multi-media fate, exposure and effects model USES-LCA. Institute for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Dynamics, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. (<http://www.leidenuniv.nl/interfac/cml/lca2/>).
- IPCC 2007 IPCC, 2007: Climate Change 2007: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Fourth Assessment. Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. [Solomon, S., D. Qin, M. Manning, Z. Chen, M. Marquis, K.B. Averyt, M. Tignor and H.L. Miller (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA, 996 pp.
- ISO 14040: 2006 ISO 14040 Environmental Management – Life Cycle Assessment – Principles and Framework. Geneva, 2006
- ISO 14044: 2006 ISO 14044 Environmental management -- Life cycle assessment -- Requirements and guidelines. Geneva, 2006
- ILCD 2010 European Commission (2010): ILCD Handbook – General guide for Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) – Detailed guidance
- PLASTICSEUROPE 2011 Life Cycle Inventory (LCI) Methodology and Product Category Rules (PCR) for Uncompounded Polymer Resins and Reactive Polymer Precursors. Version 2.0, April 2011.
- ULLMANN 2010 Ullmann's Encyclopedia of Industrial Chemistry, John Wiley & Sons, Inc. , Hoboken / USA, 2010
- WMO 2003 WMO (World Meteorological Organisation), 2003: Scientific assessment of ozone depletion: 2003. Global Ozone Research and Monitoring Project - Report no. XX. Geneva.

**PlasticsEurope AISBL**

Avenue E. van Nieuwenhuyse 4/3  
B-1160 Brussels · Belgium

Phone +32 (0)2 675 3297  
Fax +32 (0)2 675 3935

[info@plasticseurope.org](mailto:info@plasticseurope.org)  
[www.plasticseurope.org](http://www.plasticseurope.org)