



#casestudy

# simplify environmental impact analysis

Developing an easy-to-use excel-tool for comprehensive LCA  
and EPD certification

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Year: 2024

**Client: Afitexinov (Afitex Group)**

**Sector:** *Geosynthetics*



**Business area:** Afitexinov, French manufacturer of geosynthetics, specializes in soil drainage, support, waterproofing and reinforcement for construction, public works, civil engineering and the mining industry

# challenge

Customer demand for **EPDs** (*Environmental Product Declarations*) concerning the environmental performance of purchased products is growing, a condition that is becoming increasingly crucial for participating in and **remaining competitive** in public and private tenders. At the same time, the company faces the challenge of **becoming more self-sufficient** and less reliant on external consultancy by developing **internal skills and tools** to manage environmental impact analysis more quickly and efficiently.

## Afitexinov's questions:

- Is there a simple, accessible and effective tool for analysing environmental impacts?
- How can we manage the complexity of information related to the production processes of numerous products under analysis? How can we simplify?
- What data should be collected? Is it possible to automate part of the data collection process?
- What are the reference standards for EPDs?
- What is the necessary process to publish an EPD?
- Is it possible to create a single LCA report to produce EPDs for different products or is a separate report needed for each product?
- What potential obstacles could arise in the validation process by the external verifier?
- How can we ensure a real transfer of expertise from the consultant?



# course

1

## customized LCA-tool

Develop a customized Excel-based tool to simplify and automate the analysis of the environmental impacts of products, ensuring compliance with ISO and EPD requirements and providing adequate internal training

2

## life cycle assessment (LCA)

Use the tool to systematize and organize production data and to conduct a Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) on key product categories, preparing an LCA Report in compliance with the relevant ISO standards

3

## environmental product declarations (EPD)

Create the Environmental Product Declarations (EPD) for the analysed products, in compliance with the relevant PCR, and coordinate the third-party verification required for publication

### Reference standards

UNI EN ISO 14040

UNI EN ISO 14025

UNI EN ISO 14044

UNI EN 15804+A2

PCR: Construction products, 2019:14, Version 1.3.3

Environdéc, General Programme Instructions of the International EPD® System

## the role of So-What

**Guides** the team towards clear objectives and sets the course

**Facilitates** communication and makes processes more understandable

**Shares** technical expertise and tools

**Plans, coordinates and monitors** activities to ensure the project's success

**Ensure** compliance with standards





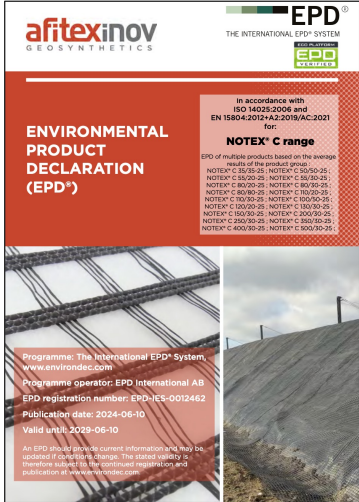
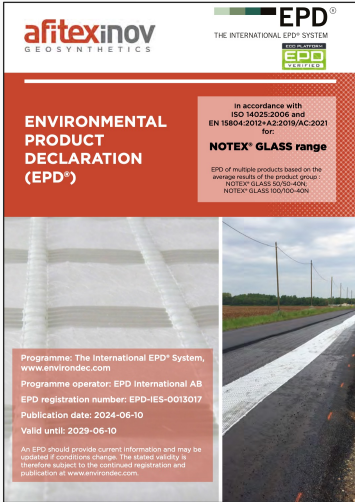
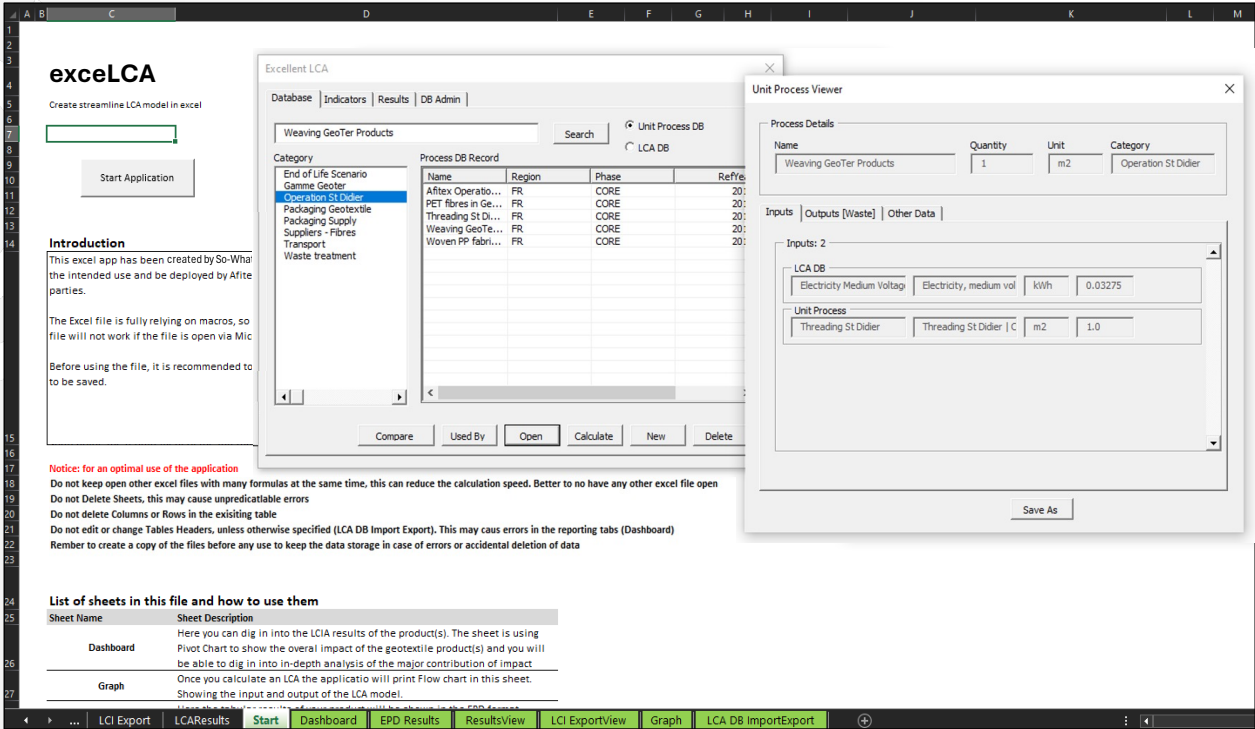
anchoring the

results

We developed an **Excel-based tool (exceLCA)** to simplify, automate and enable independent management of environmental impact analysis for the company's key products. The tool includes a **customized database** with a Bill of Materials (*BoMs*) defined together with Afitexinov. We also provided **in-depth training** on the principles of Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) and on the use of the tool through a "*learning by doing*" approach.

Using the tool, we conducted a cradle-to-grave **Life Cycle Assessment (LCA)** on **five key product categories**, encompassing **47 variants**. The environmental impact indicators were calculated according to the requirements of the *General Program Instructions* and the relevant PCR. To simplify the process, a single ISO-compliant LCA Report was produced for all products.

Based on the results, we created **5 Environmental Product Declarations (EPD)**. The LCA Report and the EPDs were reviewed by an independent auditor and, following approval, were published in the International *EPD® System library*.



Search for the EPDs in the *International EPD® System* [library](#).

“Our initial request for three EPDs eventually expanded to five. So-What successfully adapted to this change without compromising the project’s progress. Thanks to So-What and the LCA Excel-based tool we developed together, I can now initiate new EPDs independently.”

Amandine Louis, *Quality and Environment Engineer*, Afitexinov

## consulting can do good!

As a benefit corporation, So-What has decided to donate **5%** of its revenue from for-profit companies to third-sector organizations.

The collaboration with Afitexinov has supported the project ‘**The House of Hope**’ managed by the **Soletterre Foundation** in Marrakech, Morocco.

**need help navigating?**

Write to us to chart the best course: [info@so-what.it](mailto:info@so-what.it)

