American Institute of Architects
National Institute of Building Sciences

Hearing on Building Data Needs
July 18, 2011
Product data is critically needed in inter-operable formats for use in all phases of building design, construction, maintenance and operations.

Use of robust, reliable product performance data with other tools will support building professionals exponentially in advancing high performance building.
For building professionals to meet the goals of AIA, NIBS and other leadership organizations, they need tools that encompass different perspectives on product evaluation effectively and fairly.

Most importantly, building professionals need efficient access to product performance data that is validated.
Issue #2 to be Addressed

- As many building professionals work globally, access to product performance data based on ISO product standards 14040 and 14044 will support efficiency.

- Seeing Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) based on ISO Standard 14025 as an “uber label” within which labels like BIFMA Level are referenced is central to shaping a system for consistent product data.
For product data to be reliable as the basis for product comparison and selection, all manufacturers of a given product category must use the same “rules of the road”

Use of Product Category Rules (PCRs) developed with industry involvement and approved by a panel of experts must be available to insure comparability of the product data used in LCAs and EPDs
Sphere E’s Work on LCA

Sphere E with Facilities Solutions Group LLC organized a team of economic and product LCA experts to help corporations and government agencies analyze which parts of their annual spend and product types purchased result in the environmental impacts.

Deborah Dunning of Sphere E enrolled Economic LCA experts Scott Matthews and Jeffrey Morris along with Product LCA experts Wayne Trusty and Eva Schmincke to work with her and with Jonathan Estes of FSG.
Proposed Solution #1

- Invite developers green building rating systems like Green Globes, LEED etc to expand credits for selecting products with validated LCAs and EPDs

- Encourage A & D firms to take leadership roles by giving preference to products with ISO-compliant Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs)
Proposed Solution #2

- Establish a standard for LCA and EPD verification as a means of insuring the process is of high quality

- Ask EPD program operators to collaborate by co-posting EPDs so the product performance data they offer is widely accessible to building professionals
Recommended Next Step

- Invite the American Institute of Architects and the U. S. Green Building Council to join Sphere E as 2011 sponsors of THE NEW WAY TO DEFINE GREEN forum.

- Set up a Steering Committee of leaders from key government agencies and NGOs to work with forum organizers The Green Standard and Sphere E to help shape a program featuring highly useful information on building product data development and use.