



# **The Organisation Environmental Footprint (OEF) – a method recommendation by the European Commission**

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# Agenda

- Introduction – Joint Research Centre (JRC) and it's role
- Organisation Environmental Footprint (OEF)
- OEF Sector Rules (OEFSR) development – 3 year pilot
- Summary



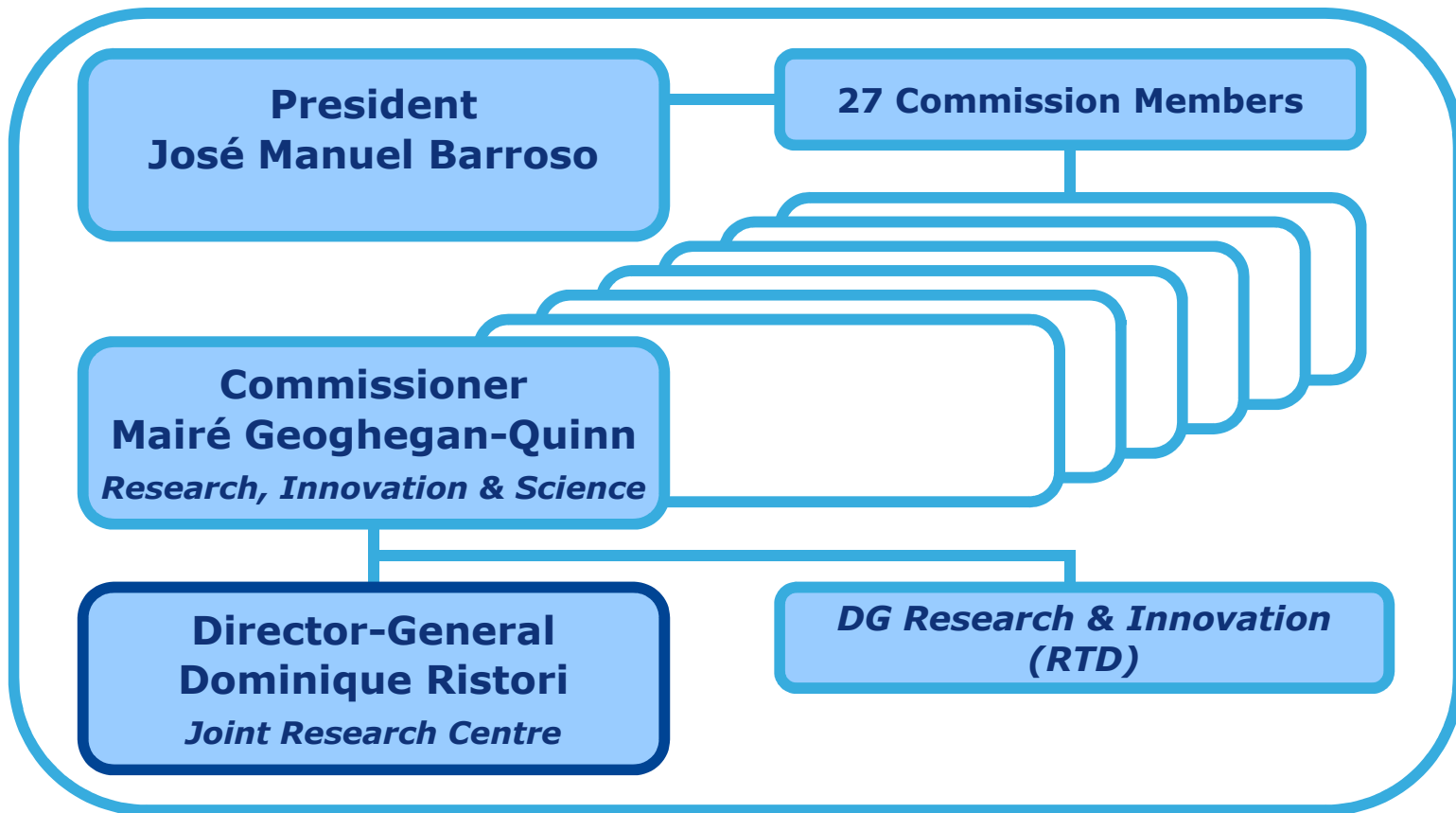
## Who are we and what do we do?

The JRC is the European Commission's in-house science service. It provides the science for policy decisions, with a view to ensuring that the EU achieves its Europe 2020 goals for a productive economy as well as a safe, secure and sustainable future.

The JRC plays a key role in the European Research Area and reinforces its multidisciplinary by networking extensively with leading scientific organisations in the Member States, Associated Countries and worldwide.



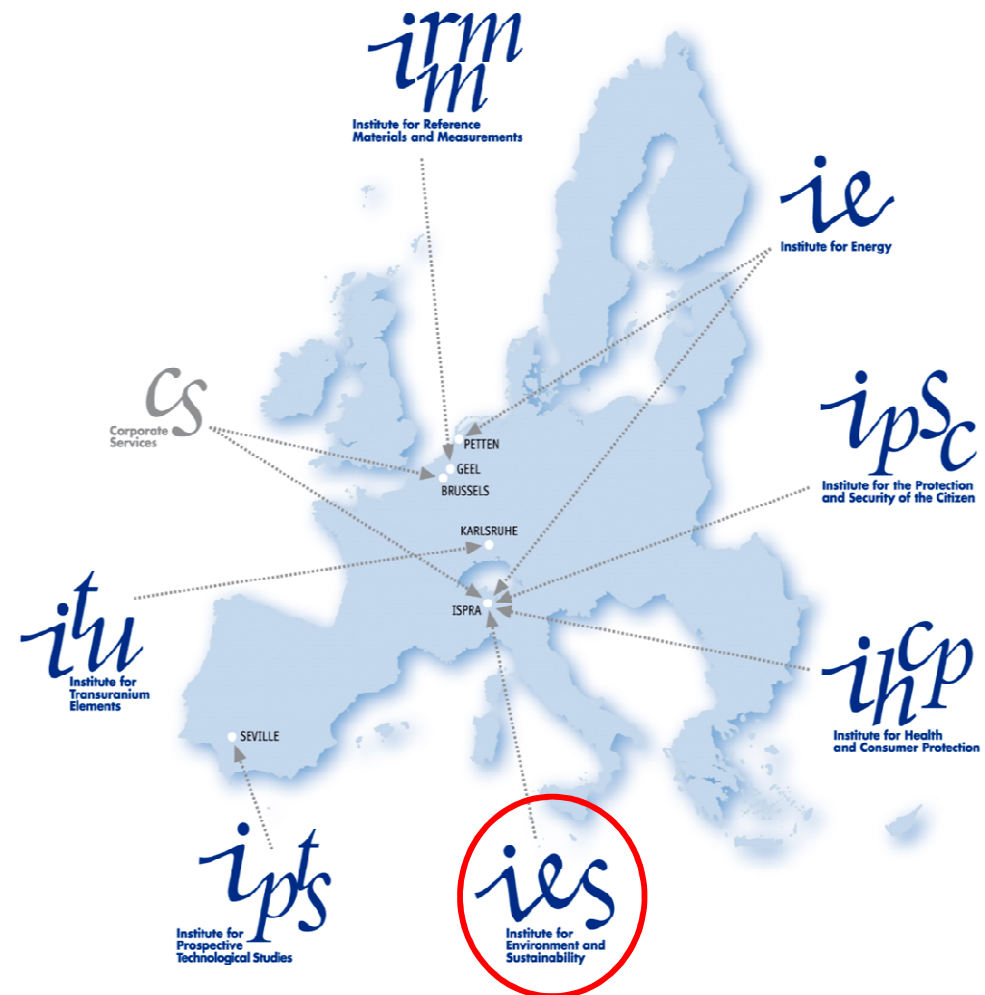
## The JRC inside the European Commission



# The JRC inside the European Commission

European Commission,  
Joint Research Centre (JRC),  
Institute for Environment and  
Sustainability (IES)

*"The mission of the IES is to provide scientific-technical support to the European Union's policies for the protection and sustainable development of the European and global environment"*



# Policy background

- ✓ **Development of the Environmental Footprint guides for products and organisations has been conducted in close co-operation with DG ENV**

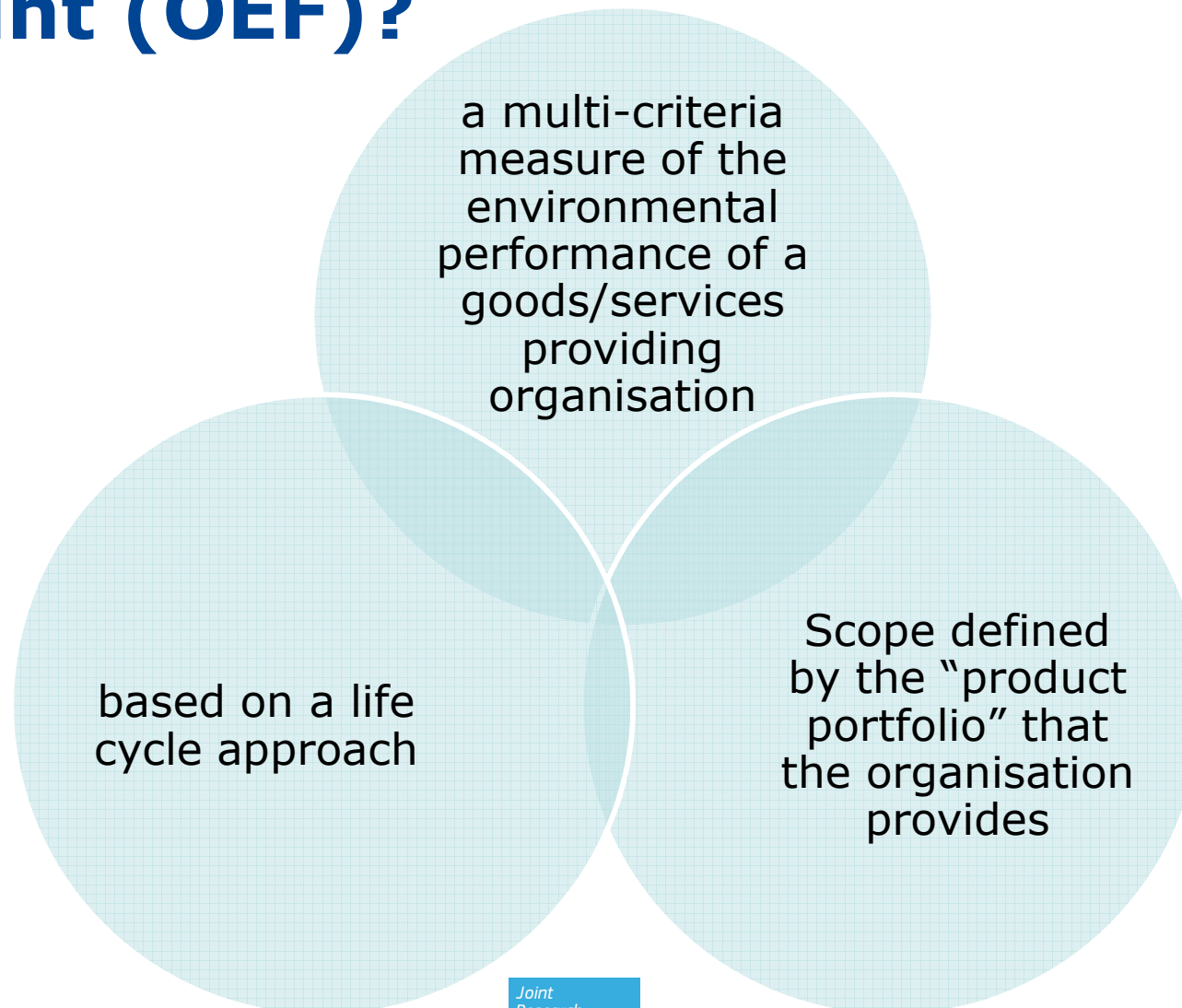
- ✓ **The Resource Efficiency Roadmap, 2011:**

Request to establish a **common methodological approach** to enable Member States and the private sector to assess, display and benchmark the **environmental performance** of products, services and **companies** based on a **comprehensive assessment of environmental impacts over the life-cycle** ('environmental footprint')

- ✓ **Building the Single Market for Green Products, 2013:**

Commission Communication (2013)196 final and related Recommendation (2013 179 EU) on Product Environmental Footprint and Organisation Environmental Footprint have the objective to “improve the availability of **clear, reliable and comparable** information on the **environmental performance of products and organisations** to all relevant stakeholders, including to players along the entire supply chain.”

## What is the Organisation Environmental Footprint (OEF)?



## Objectives

- Provide comprehensive evaluation along the life cycle (upstream and – if relevant- downstream)
- Provide comprehensive coverage of potential environmental impacts (no 'single issue' method)
- Ensure better comparability
- Ensure better quality (coherence and quality assurance)
- Build on existing methods as far as possible
- Be applicable without having to consult a series of other documents



# Analysis of existing environmental assessment methods:

Several guides/methods for the environmental assessment exist, but

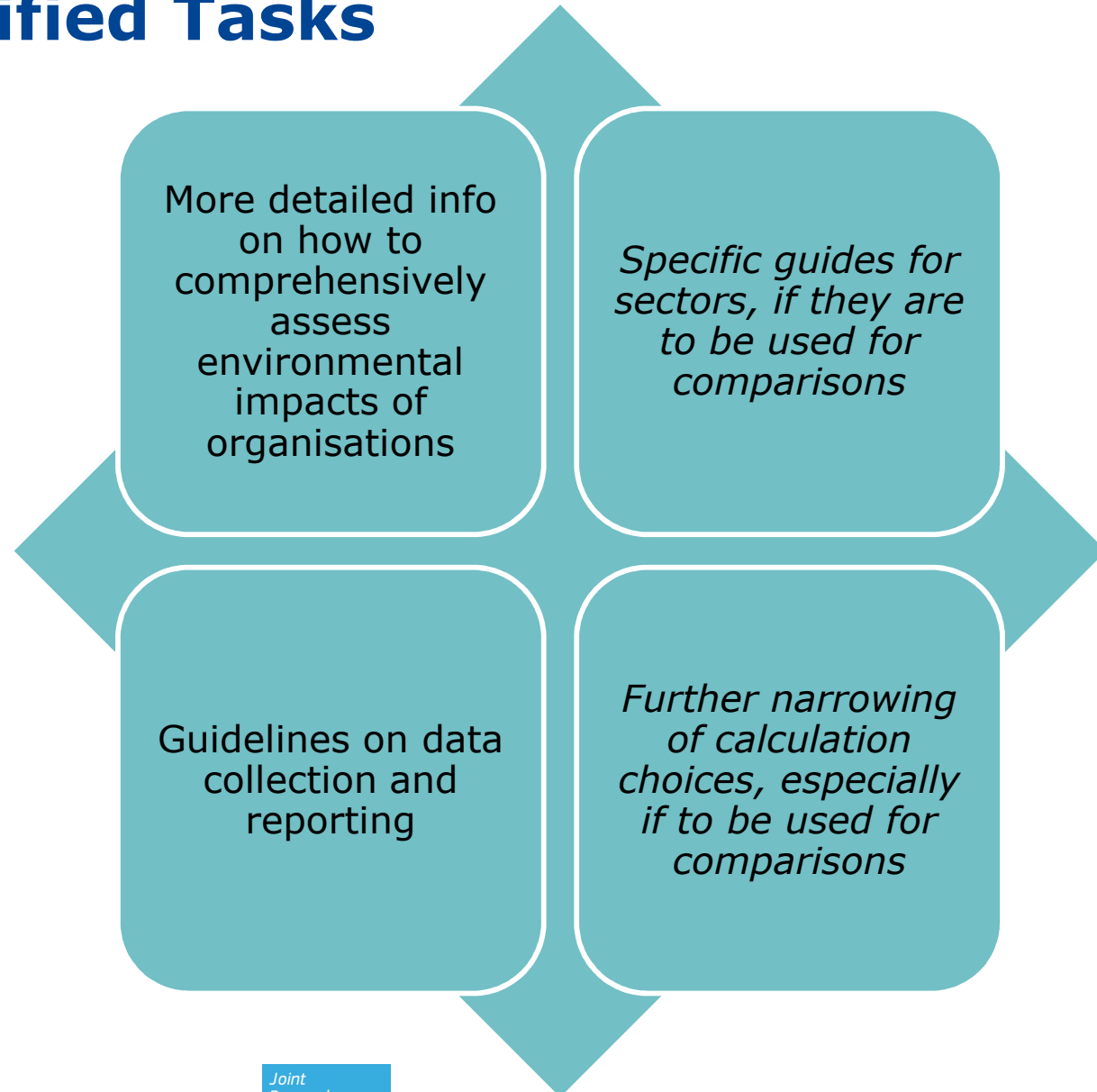
What is needed:

Have many strengths

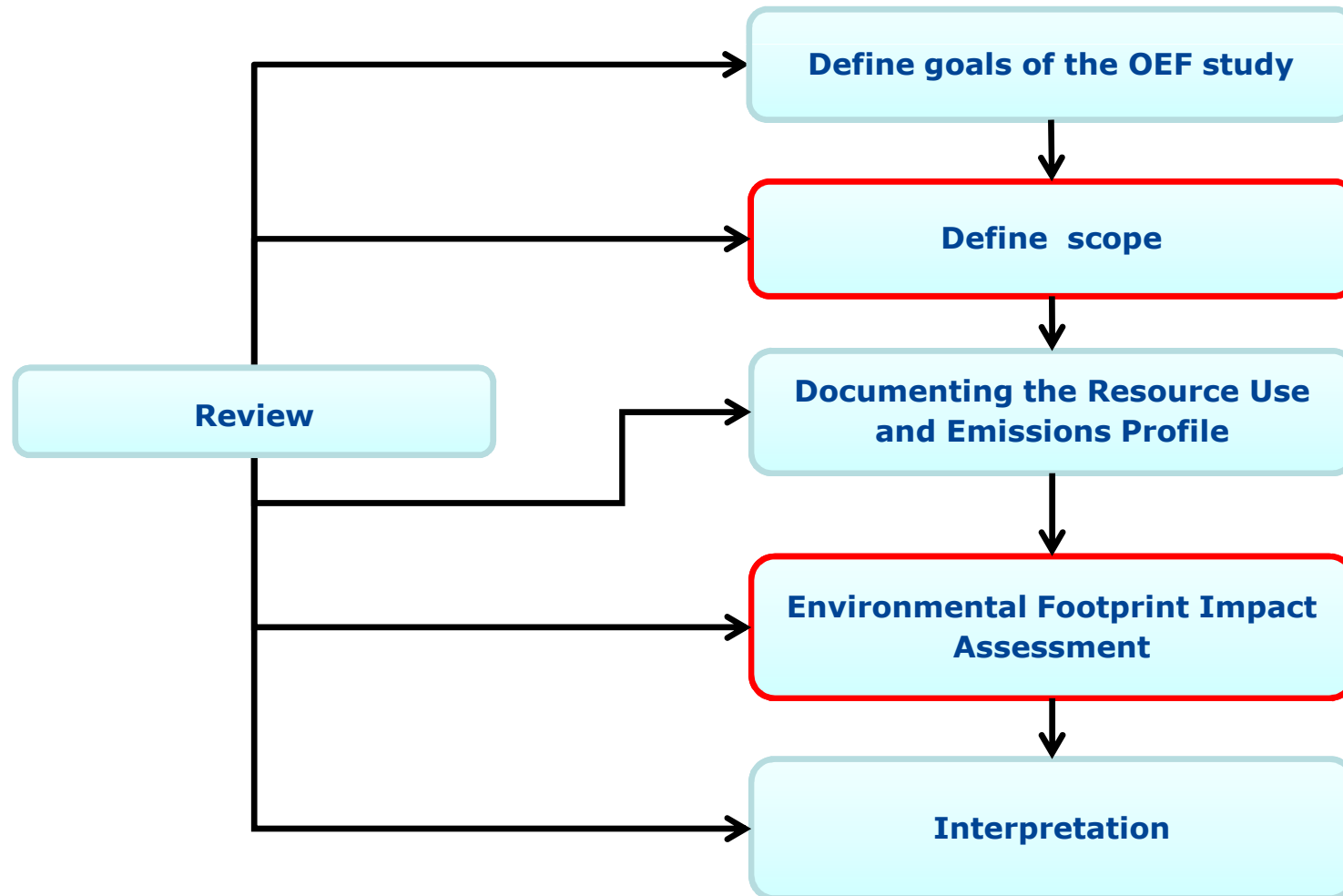
Not sufficient to serve as a recommended harmonised method for Europe

## Analysis: Identified Tasks

What is needed:



# Steps in the OEF method



# Organisation Environment Footprint - Define scope, system boundaries

Upstream

Downstream



Shall

Should

Organisational  
Boundary (Direct)

OEF Boundary  
(Indirect)

## Relation to Product Environment Footprint Guide

It is **not necessary** to calculate individual product footprints to get the organisation footprint but inputs (materials, energy) and products can be grouped

If an Organisation Environmental Footprint has been conducted, this will support also the calculation of Product Environmental Footprints

# Environmental Footprint impact assessment

## EF impact categories (14+)

Climate change

Ozone depletion

Ecotoxicity - aquatic, fresh water

Human toxicity – cancer effects

Human toxicity - non-cancer effects

Particulate Matter / Respiratory inorganics

Ionising Radiation – human health effects

Photochemical Ozone Formation

Acidification

Eutrophication - terrestrial

Eutrophication - aquatic

Resource depletion - water

Resource depletion – mineral, fossil and renewable

Land use

...



From Carbon  
Footprint to  
Environmental  
Footprint

## 3 year pilot phase for PEF and OEF

- The Recommendation (2013\_179\_EU) includes a 3 year pilot phase also to develop specific Organisation Environment Footprint Sector Rules (OEFSR)
- The call for participation is closed, many more applications for product related than organisation related pilots
- the selection of pilots has been conducted by several General Directorates, there will be 3 pilots on OEFSR development (14 product related), official start was November 04, 2013 (more info on DG ENV website)
  - OEF retailer (industry led)
  - OEF absorbent hygiene products (JRC led)
  - OEF metal sector (JRC led)

# Role of OEFSR



Need  
(as in OEF)

More detailed info on how to comprehensively assess environmental impacts

Specific guides for sectors, if to be used for comparisons

Requirements on data quality need to be specified



Response  
(Role of OEFSR)

Increase clarity and reproducibility

Increase comparability

Increase relevance

Effect  
(OEFSR & OEF)

Increase efficiency by reducing time, effort and costs for OEF studies



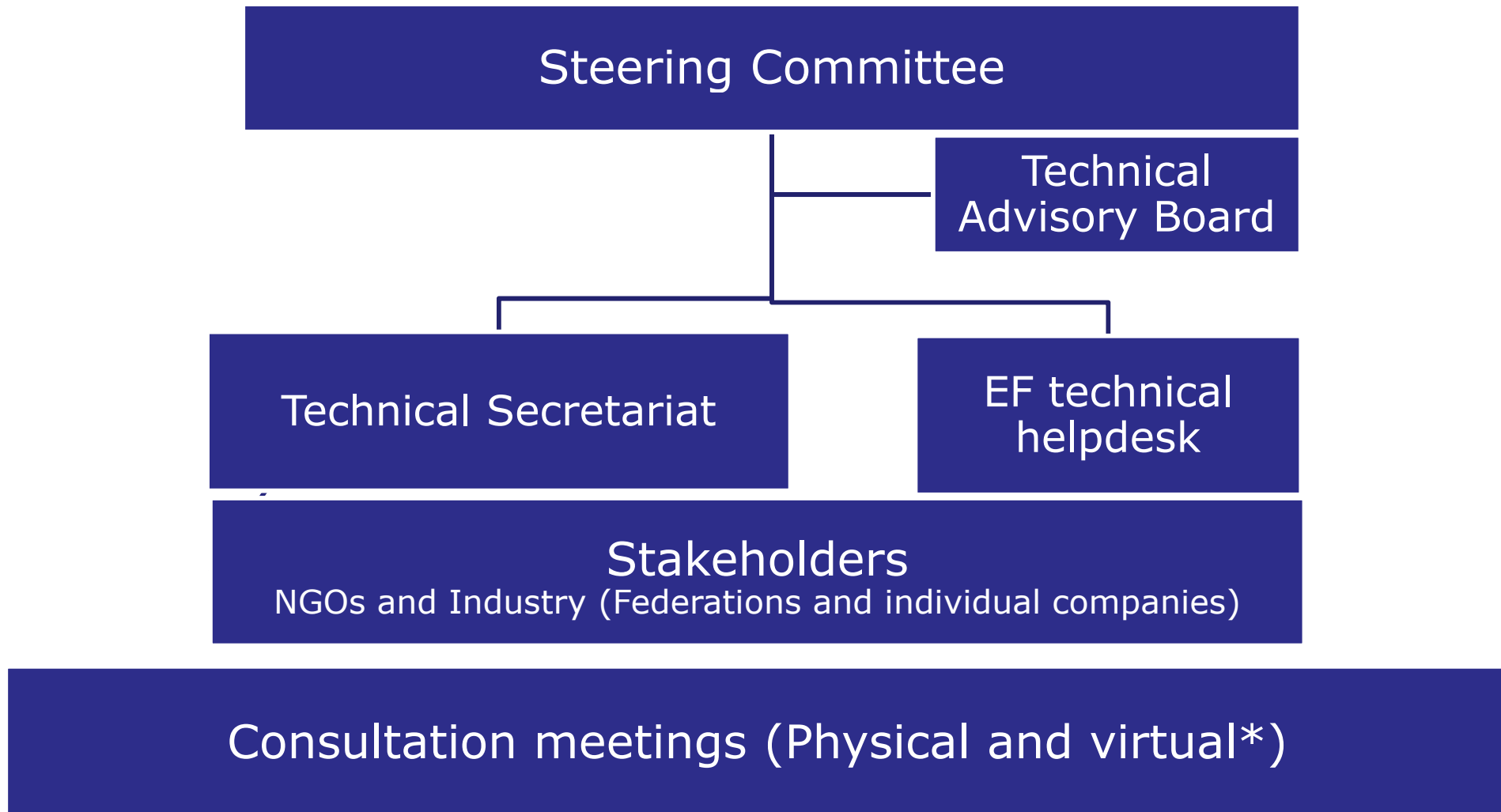


## ... which is realized through

- Directing the focus on the most important parameters
  - Processes/activities/products to be included (system boundary)
  - Impact categories and other environmental information
  - If relevant, downstream scenarios (use, transport, distribution, storage, end of life)
- Further specifying data and data quality requirements
  - for which processes specific data shall be collected or use of generic data
  - the requirements for collection of specific data
  - Specify potential data gaps and provide guidance for filling these



## Multiple stakeholders involved in a structured open process



## Take home messages on OEF and OEFSR

- 1) Measure environmental impacts on organisation level based on a life cycle approach to ensure that no important life cycle stages and environmental issues are overlooked
- 2) Recent European Commission Communication and Recommendation to implement the OEF method and to enter a 3 year pilot testing
- 3) We have to see how far we get, also regarding the objective of going towards comparability for OEF
- 4) 3 year pilot phase is a true pilot, especially for the OEF and OEFSR side as less experience is available versus product side
- 5) You are cordially invited to participate in the pilots - be it within a Technical Secretariat or as stakeholder in upcoming consultations

**Thank you for your attention!**

**Questions?**

**Further links and contact:**

**Organisation Environmental Footprint (DG ENV website):**

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eus\\_sd/smgp/organisation\\_footprint.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eus_sd/smgp/organisation_footprint.htm)

**Sustainability Assessment (H08):**

<http://ies.jrc.ec.europa.eu/the-institute/units/sustainability-assessment-unit.html>

**European platform on Life Cycle Assessment :**

<http://lct.jrc.ec.europa.eu>

**Email: [LCA@jrc.ec.europa.eu](mailto:LCA@jrc.ec.europa.eu)**

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Life Cycle Thinking and Assessment  
European Commission >> JRC >> IES >> LCT

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**Our thinking - life cycle thinking**



Life Cycle Thinking (LCT) seeks to identify possible improvements to goods and services in the form of lower environmental impacts and reduced use of resources across all life cycle stages. This begins with raw material extraction and conversion, then manufacture and distribution, through to use and/or consumption. It ends with re-use, recycling of materials, energy recovery and ultimate disposal.

The key aim of Life Cycle Thinking is to avoid burden shifting. This means minimising impacts at one stage of the life cycle, or in a geographic region, or in a particular impact category, while helping to avoid increases elsewhere. For example, saving energy during the use phase of a product, while not increasing the amount of material needed to provide it.

[Read more...](#)

**Our common goal - sustainable consumption and production**

The products we buy and use every day contribute to our comfort and well-being. However, awareness of the unsustainable levels of resource consumption and the significant impacts of these products on the environment is growing among consumers, policy makers and business.

Life Cycle Thinking seeks to identify possible improvements to goods and services in the form of lower environmental impacts and reduced use of the resources across all life cycle stages.

[Read more...](#)

**Shortcuts**

**News**

**New ELCD Released**  
[20.02.2013]

**Final Report EcoDesign Project**  
[19.12.2012]

**EXPERT WORKSHOP: Security of Supply and Scarcity of Raw Materials**  
[13.11.2012]

**Life cycle indicators framework and reports**  
[19.10.2012]

**JRC Reference Report on ILCD Handbook online**  
[11.05.2012]

**LCIA Characterisation Factors**  
[01.03.2012]

**ILCD recommended LCIA methods - final version released in November 2011**  
[20.12.2011]