

Certified palm oil matters

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Get in touch
Jannick Schmidt
Tel.: +45 333 22822
jannick.schmidt@lca-net.com

Significant greenhouse gas (GHG) savings for certified palm oil

We have finalised a detailed life cycle assessment (LCA) of palm oil production comparing the environmental impact of RSPO (Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil) certified palm oil with non-certified palm oil in Indonesia and Malaysia.

The study shows that certified palm oil has a 35% lower global warming impact and a 20% lower nature occupation impact (data for year 2016). These results were the same for two different modelling assumptions: consequential and attributional. Certified palm oil also performs better for respiratory impacts (organics and photochemical ozone), while higher impacts are found for eutrophication and acidification.

It is the first time an LCA framework has been used to assess the effects of the RSPO certification scheme. The LCA is a so-called cradle-to-gate study, which means that it includes the activities related to delivery of refined palm oil at refinery gate. The study was carried out in accordance with ISO 14040/44 on life cycle assessment with a critical panel review. The study was crowdfunded by a group of industries producing, using, and developing solutions for palm oil.

Main Reference:

Schmidt J and De Rosa M (2019). Comparative Life Cycle Assessment of RSPO-certified and Non-certified Palm Oil.

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