

PRESS RELEASE

New LCA study available on carrier bags

Berlin, 14 February 2014. A new life-cycle analysis (LCA) of carrier bags is now available. The study was performed according to ISO 14040 and 14044 and was critically reviewed and verified by DEKRA Consulting, Oeko-Institut e.V., Witzenhausen-Institut and the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH).

The study compared carrier bags made from paper, conventional plastic (polyethylene, PE), 25 percent recycled PE and a biobased and certified compostable polymer bag (PBAT/PLA) in terms of their “2-in-1” use in regions where organic waste is collected and recovered separately: this means the bags are used repeatedly as carrier bags and then, in a second step, to collect organic waste where possible.

Thus, the study goes beyond a simple material comparison because it considered the added value of compostable bags, which support organic waste diversion.

The study revealed a number of environmental benefits for the biobased and compostable polymer bags compared to paper and conventional PE bags with regard to resource consumption of raw materials, cumulative energy demand and emissions. The lowest land use was found for the PE bags, followed by the compostable plastic bag based on non-renewable PBAT. The paper bags exhibited the highest land use.

The study further shows that the above environmental benefits of compostable bags increase when they are consequently used to collect organic wastes separately.

The results of the study confirm that certified compostable bags can play an important role in promoting a bioeconomy and a resource-efficient Europe in countries where organic waste is collected separately.

For more information on the life cycle analysis, please visit:

http://en.european-bioplastics.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/LCA_carrier_bags_2014.pdf

See also – European Bioplastic Position Paper on Plastic Waste:

http://en.european-bioplastics.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/publications/PositionPaper/EuBP_PositionPaper_Waste.pdf

European Bioplastics is the European association representing the interests of the industry along the complete bioplastics' value chain. Its members produce, refine and distribute bioplastics i.e. plastics that are either biobased, biodegradable, or both. More information is available at www.european-bioplastics.org

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