

amount of solid waste to be landfilled (the official statement of the Tokyo metropolitan government is that PET is not suitable to be incinerated). A new regulation for containers which distributed the duty, and cost, of PET recycling came into effect in the following year (1997). Consumers bare the responsibility for separation in their own residence, whereas the local government assumes the cost of collection (21-29 yen per bottle). Local industry then reuses the PET for new products (cost 1.4 yen per bottle). This effectively answers the question of who should pay for recycling by placing the burden on the consumer rather than by applying a local tax. Presently, the Tokyo metropolitan government and distributors have reached an agreement to cooperate in the collection of empty PET bottles in selected stores. However, this will only be the first step towards new social regulations regarding the handling of plastic bottles in Japan.

## 7 Conclusions

This paper is concise by necessity. Therefore, since Japanese progress in LCA has been rapid since the foundation of the Japan LCA Forum in 1991, the paper has attempted to represent rather than summarize or catalog Japanese LCA-related activities. Large industry is now committed to the routine use of LCA as part of their decision process and the government recognizes that the life cycle management of products plays a key role in the implementation of their policies [12]. Numerous cases have been conducted, and diverse and interdisciplinary research is underway. Biannual international conferences on Ecobalances also forge international alliances and permit comparisons. Clearly, the three main global economic zones (North America, Europe, East Asia) face diverging challenges. The geography, resource intensity and population densities force policy makers, implicitly, and researchers, explicitly, to value various environmental stressors and impacts differently. In Japan, the commitment to funding LCA-related projects and entrenching LCA as a component of normal business practices has integrated environmental, economic and national policy considerations. Clearly, if one were to prepare this paper two years from now, its focus would be quite different.

However, the infrastructure is in place in Japan to effectively carry out and disseminate LCA information and to involve and educate all stakeholders. Projects are also underway to link national and international goals related to sustainable development to more local or commercial measures or metrics which can indicate the path or progress toward this objective.

## 8 References

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## Errata

The *Int. J. LCA* 3 (2) 86-94 (1998), "Application of the Impact Pathway Analysis in the Context of LCA" pp. 92, Table 2. Please substitute "per kWh" by "per TWh".

The *Int. J. LCA* 3 (2) 75-79 (1998), "Automobile Air Conditioning: A Case Study of CFC Replacements" pp. 78, Table 2. Please substitute "ktonnes CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent" by "kg CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent".