

HELPING MARS TO BE 'THIRSTY FOR CHANGE'



PROJECT SUMMARY

We conducted a life cycle assessment (LCA) of one of Mars' most popular coffee products in order to help Mars reduce its carbon footprint and drive product improvement as part of their recent customer campaign.

OUR CLIENT'S CHALLENGE

Mars wanted to discover the true environmental impact of one of its products as part of their 'thirsty for change' programme helping their customers reduce the impact they have on the environment. This project had two main objectives; to provide a benchmark of the environmental impact of one of its products and to gain information which would enable Mars to drive product improvement, innovations and new ideas.

OUR WORK

In order to discover the true environmental impact of a product it was necessary to conduct a LCA. Mars' most popular FLAVIA product, Columbia Coffee, was selected and its environmental impact traced through the various stages in its product-journey.

This required extensive collection of primary and secondary data for each material used and activity carried out; from raw material extraction to end of life disposal. The tracing process included, raw materials (including coffee growing), transportation, manufacture, storage, distribution, use by consumer and end-of-life activities.



THE OUTCOME

Preliminary findings from the LCA showed that the key impact in terms of energy consumption is in the use phase. In producing a cup of coffee, it is not the international transportation, the roasting or the packaging of the beans that has the highest environmental impact, but actually the energy used to heat the water and brew the drink.

Having this information clearly puts Mars in an excellent position to ensure the energy consumption of its drinks machines continues to remain low. Using the findings of the LCA, Mars will help to target the areas where it can reduce its carbon footprint and become even more focussed in its efforts to make drinks vending even more sustainable.

The LCA was completed to the internationally recognised ISO:14040 and ISO:14044 LCA standards.

"To work with WSP has given us some valuable insights which will ensure that sustainability remains of prime important in our drinks vending solutions."

Daniel Vennard, Corporate Affairs and Sustainability Director of Mars Drinks

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