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## Responsible Products and the Pathways to Sustainability

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### 1. What are lifecycle assessments and what are they used for?

Life cycle assessment (LCA) is a systematic method of assessing the environmental impacts associated with all the stages of the life cycle of a commercial product, process, or service.

### 2. What is the 'circular economy'?

The circular economy refers to a system in which resources are kept in the material cycle for as long as possible.

### 3. Could you explain how this concept differs from the more familiar linear model?

In the linear model, products and the resources used to produce them are disposed of when their service life ends. In contrast, within a circular economy, products and the resources used to produce them are re-used or recycled for as long as practical. As a result, fewer primary resources are required.

### 4. What is the best way for specifiers to identify products that have undergone lifecycle assessments and have been shown to be genuinely sustainable?

The best way for specifiers to identify genuinely sustainable products is by reference to Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs), as well environmental certifications such as Global Greentag.

### 5. What is WELS?

The Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards (WELS) scheme is Australia's urban water saving scheme. It involves a star rating displayed on products that allows consumers to compare the water efficiency of different products.