UBC Social Ecological Economic Development Studies (SEEDS) Student Report

Zahra Hosseini A Life Cycle Analysis of the Geography Building CIVL 498C November 25, 2013 University of British Columbia

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PROVISIO

This study has been completed by undergraduate students as part of their coursework at the University of British Columbia (UBC) and is also a contribution to a larger effort – the UBC LCA Project – which aims to support the development of the field of life cycle assessment (LCA).

The information and findings contained in this report have not been through a full critical review and should be considered preliminary.

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Executive Summary

This life cycle analysis was performed on the UBC Geography Building, a 51,883 sf, wood-frame academic building built in 1924, for the purpose of establishing a materials inventory and environmental impact reference to be applied in the assessment of potential upgrades. It was also completed simultaneously with 20 other institutional buildings at UBC for creating a benchmark as a standard against which existing buildings and new constructions assess and interpret. The benchmark is assessed for each environmental impact category through calculating the average impact per square meter of the element.

The Takeoff model, developed by last year student¹, and the original architectural drawings of the Geography Building are used to check the accuracy of the quantity of materials (length, area, and number) used as the IE input data. In this project, IE Inputs are sorted based on a modified version of level 3 of Canadian Institute of Quantity Surveyors (CIQS) format. From the improved model and using Athena Sustainable Materials Institute's Impact Estimator Bill of Materials was and Environmental impacts of each level 3 element were determined. The largest quantities of material were gypsum board, softwood plywood, 6mil polyethylene, cedar wood shiplap, and stucco.

The summary of environmental impact measures for different level 3 CIQS categories were also obtained from IE software and the hotspots for each environmental impact category among different lifecycle stages and among different level 3 CIQS categories were identified. Roof Constructions, Walls above Grade, and Foundations have the highest impacts respectively. There are only very small basement areas in the building and the ground floors are inclined wood joist floors which are included in Upper level construction elements. Thus, the Lowest floor construction and Walls below grade, does not have a significant environmental impact. The comparisons also indicate that the Construction stage has much more environmental impacts that Production stage.

In comparison with CIVL 498C 2013 benchmark (date: 11/24/2013), the total environmental impacts of Geography building, its impacts for Production and Construction stages, and also its impacts for all the CIQS level 3 elements are way below average, except for the Foundation and Walls below grade elements. This difference can be related to the fact that the building is modeled based on its primary drawing from 1924 which was intended to be a temporary building. Thus, the quantity of materials used in the project is minimal. There is no heating insulation material in the drawings and very minimal concrete work. The building does not have slab on grade in the ground level and all the structure is wooden. A reason for the higher impacts for the foundation in this building is that the quantity of this element is much less that other projects, because the building does not have slab on grade. Hence, the environmental impacts of the foundation elements are divided to the floor area of the footings and crawlspace walls, while in other projects the impacts are divided into the slab on grade area, which covers most of the building site. An important lesson that can be learned from comparing this old building with its more recent equivalents is the significant role of wood in decreasing the environmental impacts of a project, as oppose to concrete or metal structures. Further, detailed LCA analysis of structural elements in UBC buildings can help reducing the environmental impacts in future projects.

 $¹$ (Connaghan, 2009)</sup>

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1. General Information on the Assessment

1.1. Purpose of the assessment

The initial stage of a life cycle analysis study is to clearly define the goal and scope. Conclusions and recommendations can then be made in accordance with the goal and scope, which affects the detail and time frame of the LCA. This LCA of the Geography Building at the University of British Columbia was carried out to determine the environmental impact of its design². This LCA of the Geography Building is also part of UBC LCA database, an inventory of the environmental impact of UBC buildings that is intended to be used to stimulate this area and transform green building practices in North America³. The data base is mainly developed by UBC students in CIVL 498C course.

The main outcomes of this LCA study are the establishment of a materials inventory and environmental impact references for the Geography Building. An exemplary application of these references is in the assessment of potential future performance upgrades to the structure and envelope of the Geography Building. When this study is considered in conjunction with other UBC building LCA studies, further applications include the possibility of carrying out environmental performance comparisons across UBC buildings over time and between different materials, structural types and building functions. Furthermore, by identifying hot spots in the value chain, this LCA study can be seen as an essential part of the formation of a powerful tool to help inform the decision making process of policy makers in establishing quantified sustainable development guidelines for future UBC construction, renovation and demolition projects⁴. The study is also aim to provide a benchmark for all the buildings that are studied in this class (CIVL 498C, 2013), based on the average environmental impacts per square meter.

The intended core audiences of this LCA study are those involved in building development related policy making at UBC, such as the Project Services, UBC Properties Trust, and Campus Sustainability, who are involved in creating policies and frameworks for sustainable development on campus. Other

potential audiences include developers, architects, engineers and building owners involved in design planning, as well as external organizations such as governments, private industry and other universities whom may want to learn more or become engaged in performing similar LCA studies within their organizations 5 .

1.2. Identification of building

When the University of British Columbia moved to its present Point Grey site in the Fall of 1925 the Department of Geology and Geography was placed in a "temporary"

Figure 1 Construction of the "temporary" Geography Building circa 1925. ©UBC

² (Connaghan, 2009)

³ (UBC Sustainability, n.d.)

 $⁴$ (Connaghan, 2009)</sup>

⁵ (Connaghan, 2009)

building. That 51,883 sf wood-frame building is the present Geography Building, completely rebuilt inside during the late 1970s, and still standing after more than 60 years as a "temporary" building⁶ (Figure 1). The building is made from wood-frame and stucco by Provincial Department of Public Works (The architect). The building is located at 1984 West Mall, Vancouver on the University of British Columbia campus and was originally named the Applied Science Building, renamed Forestry and Geology in 1951⁷. It was built in conjunction with eight other buildings—the old forestry, agriculture, arts and administration buildings, the electrical and mechanical laboratories, the auditorium, and the mining, metallurgy and hydraulics building $-$ all of which were built as semi-permanent buildings, and the total cost for all nine buildings was \$500,000. The function of the building was to house the academic needs of Geology, Civil Engineering, Zoology, Forestry and Botany, and was originally composed of 13 laboratories, 17 offices, 13 research and prep rooms, 12 lecture rooms, eight storage rooms, five lavatories and three locker rooms, as well as a library, museum and common room⁸. Nowadays the building is only used by Geography Department and has 12 classrooms, 1 main lecture room, 2 computer labs, 19 staff offices, 17 graduate student offices, 36 faculty offices, 18 research labs, 2 lounges, and 4 washrooms⁹.

Since its original construction, the Geography Building has undergone many renovations for a total of six phases of alterations. Some major alterations included wall, ceiling and room changes, additional fire exit stairwells, and the installation of two firewalls through the cross section of the building. The firewalls in particular required the two main stairwells to be demolished, as well as the walls on the ground and first floors between the front and rear entrances to be torn out (Figure 2). Overall, the building's floors and exterior walls remain intact, but many of the interior walls have been altered to accommodate floor plan changes and new building requirements. This model, however, will represent the Geography Building as it was built in 1924, as if it were built today 10 .

Figure 2 Ground plan highlighting the sections of building torn down for firewall installation

7 (The University of British Columbia Library, 2013)

9 (Department of Geography - UBC, n.d.)

(Connaghan, 2009)

 \overline{a} 6 (University of British Columbia, 2009)

⁸ (Connaghan, 2009)

Table 1 Summary of assessment information

1.3.Other Assessment Information

Table 1 provides a summary of assessment information.

2. General Information on the Object of Assessment

2.1. Functional Equivalent

The functional unit in this study is square meter floor/surface area. Considering the area as functional unit provide the possibility of comparing different building studied by other students in the CIVL498C course and also provide the benchmark for these buildings, against which the impact of new projects can be assessed. Table 2 describes Geography Building's functional equivalent.

Table 2 Functional Equivalent Definition

Table 3 Building Characteristics of the Geography Building¹¹

2.2.Reference Study Period

Assessments are carried out on the basis of a chosen reference study period. According to EN 15978, the default value for the reference study period shall be the required service life of the building. Assessments are carried out on the basis of a chosen reference study period.

The Geography Building was built in the fall of 1925 as a "temporary" building; however, it completely rebuilt inside during the late 1970s. The building which is 88 old is currently under drainage, envelope, exterior painting, roof, and seismic upgrading seismic improvement¹². In order to focus on design related impacts, previous report of the Geography Building LCA encompasses a cradle-to-gate scope that includes the raw material extraction, manufacturing of construction materials, and construction of the structure and envelope of the Geography Building, as well as associated transportation effects throughout the manufacturing and construction stages. Thus, the reference study period in this project is considered to be 1 year. So that the assessment only includes cradle-to-gate scope, i.e. the raw material extraction, manufacturing of construction materials, and construction of the structure and envelope, as well as associated transportation effects throughout the manufacturing and construction¹³. The maintenance, operating energy and end-of-life stages of the building's life cycle are left outside the scope of assessment, which also makes the comparison of different studied buildings more feasible, as they may have different required service life.

2.3.Object of Assessment Scope

Table 3 describes materials and components used in the geography building, from its foundations to the external works that are enclosed within the area of the building's site. To manage the material used in the project and create a standardized list of elements in the building, this study uses a modified version of the Canadian Institute of Quantity Surveyors (CIQS) Level 3 to sort the materials. IN CIQS the

 11 (Connaghan, 2009)

 12 (Geography Students Association, 2013)

 13 (Connaghan, 2009)

elements ordered hierarchically into four levels to allow different levels of aggregation and summarization as follows:

- Level 1 elements are referred to as 'Major Group Elements'.
- Level 2 elements are referred to as 'Group Elements'
- Level 3 elements are referred to as 'Elements'
- Level 4 elements are referred to as 'Sub-Elements'

The full version of the CIQS Level 3 Elements is not applied as the study refers to the previous report of the Geography building¹⁴ to acquire the information about the materials used in the building. Therefore, the report excludes the elements which are not assessed in the previous report, i.e. A12 Basement Excavation, B2 Finishes, B3 Fittings & Equipments, C Services, D Site & Ancillary works (Figure 3). The decision to omit these building components, are associated with the limitations of available data and the IE software¹⁵, as well as to minimize the uncertainty of the model¹⁶. Moreover, to simplify the study some elements are merged into one element group: Doors and windows are included in the walls element group rather than having their separate group (A33). Table 4 provides a list of components included in each element category in Geography Building.

 \overline{a} 14 (Connaghan, 2009)

¹⁵ Athena IE does not have data on finishes, electrical, plumbing or HVAC materials (Athena Institute, 2013).

 16 (Connaghan, 2009)

Figure 4 Display of modular information for the different stages of the building assessment

3. Statement of Boundaries and Scenarios Used in the Assessment

3.1.System Boundary

The system boundary determines the processes that are taken into account for the object of assessment. EN 15798 prefers that the system boundary include all building life cycle modules and all the upstream and downstream processes needed to establish and maintain the function(s) of the object of assessment, from the acquisition of raw materials to their disposal or to the point where materials exit the system boundary during the defined reference study period (Figure 4). Upstream includes energy and resource extraction (Product and Construction stages) and downstream include resource use and waste generation (Use and End of life stages).

This LCA study includes only Product and Construction stages in the building life cycle, i.e. A1-5 modules. Table 5 indicates upstream and downstream processes supporting modules included in this study over the reference study period (1 year).

Table 4 Geography Building Definition

3.1.1. Product Stage¹⁷

The product stage is also known as 'cradle to gate' for the building products and services that are reference flows for the construction stage of the object of assessment. Product Stage in Athena LCI is developed by tracking energy use and emissions to air, water and land for each of the following modules:

3.1.1.1. Raw Material Supply

For this module, resource use and emissions are assessed per unit of raw resources such as timber, iron ore, coal, limestone, aggregates and gypsum. In addition to the actual harvesting, mining or quarrying of a resource, data from the extraction phase includes activities such as reforestation and beneficiation (a mining technique that involves separating ore into valuable product and waste).

3.1.1.2. Transport

This module includes the transportation of raw resources to the mill or plant, which defines the boundary between extraction and manufacturing.

3.1.1.3. Manufacturing

Manufacturing, typically accounts for the largest proportion of embodied energy and emissions associated with the life cycle of a building product. In Athena inventory studies, this stage starts with the delivery of raw resources and other materials to the mill or plant gate and ends with the finished product ready for shipment. The Impact Estimator software combines resource extraction and manufacturing into a single activity stage (Product) for results reporting purposes.

3.1.2. Construction Stage¹⁸

The on-site construction stage is like an additional manufacturing step where individual products, components and sub-assemblies come together in the manufacture of the building. This stage covers the processes from the factory gate of the different construction products to the practical completion of the construction work.

Table 5 Upstream and downstream processes supporting each LCA module

¹⁷ (Athena Sustainable Materials Institute, 2013a)

¹⁸ (Athena Sustainable Materials Institute, 2013a)

3.1.2.1. Transport

In the Athena tools, this stage starts with the transportation of individual products and subassemblies from manufacturing facilities to distributors in various Canadian and US regions. Average or typical transportation distances to building sites within each city are applied. This is an important life cycle stage that is often overlooked in life cycle assessments for products alone. Transportation of materials is based on a weighted average of the distances from which materials are sourced, by different modes of transportation (diesel road, diesel rail, RFO barge, RFO ship). For example, if LA gets a certain percentage of it's wood from BC, the pacific northwest and the south east, the distances travelled, for each mode of transport are summed up and averaged according to the percentage from each region. All our data is North American, and is assumed to manufactured in the US or Canada, as of yet we don't account for materials coming from overseas 19 .

3.1.2.2. Construction-Installation Processes

The on-site construction activity stage also includes storage of products, site clearing, waste generation and management until disposal, the energy use of machines like cranes and mixers, the transportation of equipment to and from the site, concrete form-work, ancillary materials, and temporary heating and ventilation.

4. Environmental Data

4.1. Data Sources

This study uses of the Athena LCI Database for material process data, and the US LCI Database for energy combustion and pre-combustion processes for electricity generation and transportation.

Athena Institute has developed their own life cycle inventory (LCI) databases for building materials to be used in their Impact Estimator software for buildings. These databases are built from the ground up using several actual mill or engineered process models across the continent and are not reliant on trade or government data sources. This way, a good cross-sectional industry average formulation and environmental profile for each material is produced. The manufacturing effects of that average formulation are then regionalized for each location by applying manufacturing technology, recycled content differences for products produced in various regions, local electricity, energy and transportation grids. The data has developed not only for building materials and products but also for energy use, transportation, construction and demolition processes including on-site construction of a building's assemblies, maintenance, repair and replacement effects through the operating life, and demolition and disposal²⁰.

U.S. Life Cycle Inventory (LCI) Database is a publicly available database developed by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) and its partners to help life cycle assessment (LCA) practitioners answer questions about environmental impact. This database provides individual gate-to-gate, cradleto-gate and cradle-to-grave accounting of the energy and material flows into and out of the

 \overline{a} ¹⁹ (Athena Institute, 2013)

 20 (Athena Institute, 2013), (Athena Sustainable Materials Institute, 2013b)

environment that are associated with producing a material, component, or assembly in the U.S. This LCI Database Project was initiated on May 1, 2001, and gained national prominence at a meeting of interests hosted by the Ford Motor Company. Funding agencies and representatives of industrial, academic, and consulting communities voiced strong support for the project. As a result, an advisory group with 45 representatives from manufacturing, government, and nongovernment organizations, as well as LCA experts, worked together to create the database²¹.

4.2.Data Adjustments and Substitutions

Table 6 presents the material type and property inaccuracies found in Geography Building Impact Estimator model.

"Lath and Plaster" which is the interior cladding material for interior and exterior walls is replaced with "Gypsum board". To improve the model, literature should be researched to find a LCA study on "Lath and Plaster" material as a wall cladding. However, we cannot access the IE database to add the new cladding material. An option is to not add any interior cladding for the wall in IE and add the impacts found for "Lath and Plaster" in the literature in the final results. Impacts should be multiplied to the wall area that is calculated in our study.

4.3.Data Quality

The primary source of data for this LCA is the original architectural drawings from when the Geography Building was initially constructed in 1924. Additional structural drawings from 2004 were also used to determine the live loading on the building. Two main software tools are to be utilized to complete the study; On Center's On- Screen Takeoff and the Athena Sustainable Materials Institute's Impact Estimator (IE) for buildings.

The drawings used in this study lack some sufficient material details, which necessitate the usage of assumptions to complete the modeling of the building in the IE software. Furthermore, there are inherent assumptions made by the IE software and limitations to what it can model, which necessitated further assumptions to be made. These assumptions and limitation will be discussed further in Table 16 in Appendix D.

Here are some examples of uncertainties exist in this study:

 \bullet Lath and plaster is considered to be $\frac{1}{2}$ " regular gypsum board on the inside of all exterior walls, as well as both sides of all interior walls (Appendix D). This assumption used on such a widely used material can then greatly affect the environmental impacts that this building will have. This assumption could be a potential source of uncertainty in the model's results²².

 \overline{a} 21 (NREL, 2013)

 22 (Connaghan, 2009)

Table 6 Material type and property inaccuracies in Geography building IE model

- Not all characteristics of emissions are taken into account when doing an impact assessment. The impact assessment software converts specified amounts masses of emissions into their equivalent environmental and human impacts. Although this data had been collected through many environmental and health studies, the impacts are still dependent on an infinite number of factors—such as time, temperature, environment sensitivity, etc.— compromising the accuracy of these impact equivalencies. In addition, there are a number of chemicals within the environment that can react together to produce other chemicals. This reaction could potentially create more or less hazardous chemicals. Overall, this lack of detail could result in over- or underestimation of environmental impacts 23 .
- The way that the emissions are converted to impacts can also cause uncertainty in the summary measures. TRACI, the impact assessment methodology used for this study, relates emissions to impacts through characterization factors. These factors, however, are linear and do not take into account the initial amount that the environment is able to absorb without effects, as well as the drop off of effects when there are so many emissions that further emissions do not cause any more harm. This could cause over- or underestimations of the impacts, depending on the relationship the each emission has with the environment²⁴.
- Finally, the way in which the impact assessment methodology allocates impacts to different products along the line of production can affect the overall results. Co-products from the same unit process can be quantified by mass, volume, economic value, etc. Depending on which method of quantification is used, the impacts allocated to each co-product will differ²⁵.

5. List of Indicators Used for Assessment and Expression of Results

Using Athena IE for buildings, this study measures resources, material and energy flows to and from nature over the raw material extraction and supply, transport, manufacturing, and construction modules for the Geography Building and assesses the potential impact of those flows on ecosystems and human health. Potential effects are assessed and categorized through the following "mid-point" metrics developed by the US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA), the Tool for the Reduction and Assessment of Chemical and other environmental Impacts (TRACI) version 2.2: fossil fuel consumption, global warming ("carbon footprint"), acidification ("acid rain"), eutrophication ("algal bloom"), human health criteria (respiratory), photochemical oxidant creation ("summer smog"), and ozone depletion ("ozone hole")²⁶. While the indicators do not directly address the ultimate environmental impacts, they do provide a convenient way to summarize and compare the masses of inventory data, and at least make decisions on the basis of whether an alternative is likely to result in a reduction of flows from and to nature²⁷.

 \overline{a} 23 (Connaghan, 2009)

⁽Connaghan, 2009)

²⁵ (Connaghan, 2009)

 26 (Connaghan, 2009), (O'Connor, Meil, Baer, & Koffler, 2012), (W. Trusty, 2009)

 27 (Wayne B Trusty & Horst, 2003)

Fossil Fuel consumption, measured by MJ of fuel consumed, is the potential to lead to the reduction of the availability of low cost/energy fossil fuel supplies. Fossil fuel shortages leading to use of other energy sources, which may lead to other environmental or economic effects²⁸

Global warming potential, measured in kg $CO₂$ equivalent, is the potential for the earth's climate to change based on the build-up of chemicals, and subsequent heat entrapment. The chemicals that affect this summary measure include greenhouse gases, and the total effect is based on their "radiative forcing and lifetime"²⁹.

Acidification, measured in moles of H+ equivalent, is the potential for an increase of acidity of water and oil systems to occur. This can occur through both wet and dry depositions, and is caused by SO_2 and NO_x emissions³⁰.

Human Health respiratory effects potential is affected by the "total suspended particulates, particulate material (PM) less than 10µm in diameter (PM₁₀), PM less than 2.5µm in diameter (PM_{2.5}), and by emissions of SO2 and NOx", and is measured in kg PM2.5 equivalent. These particles can have toxic effects on human health, including "chronic and acute respiratory symptoms, as well as mortality"³¹

Eutrophication potential, which is measured in kg N equivalent, is the potential for materials and their emissions to fertilize surface waters with previously scarce nutrients. This can then cause an expansion of aquatic photosynthetic plant species, leading to possible odours, decrease in marine habitat and production of chemicals that could be a health hazard³².

Ozone depletion potential, measured in kg CFC-11 equivalent, is the potential for reduction of the protective ozone due to accelerated destructive chemical reactions caused by chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), halons and other chemicals. This reduction can cause lower level ozone level, which can cause increased UVB levels and harmful effects on marine life, crops and human health—including cancer³³.

Smog potential, which is measured in kg NO_x equivalent, is the potential for material emissions to cause smog. This can cause harmful effect on human health, including asthma and mortality, and can be deleterious to plant life 34 .

6. Model Development

The quantity of materials consumed in the project is assessed, using the model which last year student has developed in On-Screen Takeoff version 3.9.0.6, a software tool designed to perform material takeoffs with increased accuracy and speed in order to enhance the bidding capacity of its

²⁸ (Bare, Norris, Pennington, & Mckone, 2003)

 29 (Bare et al., 2003)

 30 (Bare et al., 2003)

 31 (Bare et al., 2003)

 32 (Bare et al., 2003)

 33 (Bare et al., 2003)

 34 (Bare et al., 2003)

users. Using imported digital plans, the program simplifies the calculation and measurement of the takeoff process, while reducing the error associated with these two activities.

In the last year study, the measurements generated are formatted into the inputs required for the IE building LCA software, i.e. Foundations, Floors, Walls, Roofs, and extra materials. The Takeoff model and the original architectural drawings from when the Geography Building are used to check the accuracy of the quantity of materials (length, area, and number) used as the IE input data. In this project, IE Inputs are sorted based on a modified version of level 3 of CIQS format as described in section 2.3 (Table 4).

Overall, the drawings were high quality, allowing the takeoffs to be performed with ease. There was lack of information concerning concrete properties, foundation assembly heights and wall crosssections, and assumptions were made based on research. In addition, some material quantities required assemblies to be factored due to limitations with the IE software³⁵. Further detailed information and calculations on all assumptions made as well as the formatted IE inputs can be found in Appendix D.

Here is a description of how each of your Level 3 elements was modeled, including assumptions and challenges associated with each of the programs:

6.1.A11 Foundation

The Foundation element consist of columns concrete footings, Exterior walls strip footings, and Crawl space walls.

For the foundation element, concrete footings were calculated using all three measurement conditions, and were assumed to be composed of concrete with 4000psi strength, #4 rebar reinforcement and average fly ash content. Column footings on the foundation were measured using the count condition with the width and length provided from drawing 401-06-016, and the thickness provided from drawing 401-06-17. They were then labeled based on the dimensions—e.g. 4'x4' Concrete Footing. The strip footing below the exterior concrete wall was modeled using the width provided from drawing 401-06-016 and the linear condition used to measure the Foundation Exterior Wall with Footings, and was labeled accordingly.

Crawlspace walls are the walls in the foundation level which are not the exterior walls for the basement, but rather raise the ground floor (Section Drawings: 401-06-19/20). Crawlspace walls on the foundation levels were modeled using linear conditions labeled based on their thickness, material, floor level and if they were interior or exterior walls (e.g. Foundation 8" Interior Concrete Wall). They were assumed to have a height of 3.5ft, based on an average of measurements from drawings 401-06-019 and 401-06-020, as well as concrete with 4000psi strength, #5 rebar reinforcement and average fly ash $\mathsf{content}^{\mathsf{36}}$.

For the foundation exterior crawlspace wall with footings, thickness of 10" was given, however 8" was used due to IE limitations, therefore length of the exterior wall was multiplied by a factor of (10"/8") for a total length of 1363.75' to meet the concrete volume.

 35 (Connaghan, 2009)

 36 (Connaghan, 2009)

6.2.A21 Lowest Floor Construction

Based on Drawing 401-07-001 section D, the building does not have any slab-on-grade. The only surfaces that are built on the site ground are Tank Room, Neutralizing Tank, Store room, and Ground Concrete floors.

The floors were modeled using the area condition, and were labeled based on their material, floor level and location (e.g. Ground Concrete Floor). For all the floors, an assumed live load of 50psf was also used based on drawing 401-07-001, a list of specifications from a 2004 renovation. Foundation Concrete Floor was modeled as a slab on grade using the area condition, with a thickness measurement of 4". The concrete for the slab was assumed to have strength of 4000psi and average fly ash content³⁷.

6.3.A22 Upper Floor Construction

Upper Floor Construction includes suspended Slabs, wood joist floors (Inclined and stepped floors), stairs construction, ground floor beams, foundation and ground posts, and girders. Although, Ground Floor Area and Ground Level Lecture Room are the lowest floor in most of the building area, they are included in A22 rather than A21. It is due to the CIQS categorization which includes the Suspended floors and decks and Inclined and stepped floors in A22 element category.

The floors in the Geography building were modeled using the area condition, and were labeled based on their material, floor level and location (Ground Sloped Lecture Room). For all the floors, an assumed live load of 50psf was also used based on drawing 401-07-001. An assumed span of 16ft was also used to fit within the 11.8ft - 32.0ft span limitation of the IE software. The wood joist floors were assumed to have $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick plywood decking based on knowledge of the decking being wood. In addition, the spans were assumed to be 10ft to fit within the 0.98ft - 15.0ft span limitation of the IE software. Finally, the sloped section of the lecture room was modeled to have a slope based on the dimensions of the risers and treads of the steps, as seen in drawing 401-06-019. A sloped wood joist floor was modeled, and the addition material used for the steps was added as extra basic material. This volume of material was calculated based on the number of steps, and the dimensions of the risers and treads. In addition, it was assumed that the steps had a width of 50ft, based on a drawing measurement, and the wood steps were $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick 38 .

The beams and girders were modeled in On-Screen Takeoff using linear conditions combined with cross section dimensions given by the drawing 401-06-016, 401-06-017 and 401- 06-18. The posts were also modeled using dimensions from the above drawings and drawing 401-06-020 for post heights, as well at count conditions. All beams, girders and posts included in A21 and A22 were labeled based on dimensions, floor level and material, and were modeled using extra basic materials to simplify calculations. The difference

Figure 5 Concrete stairs thickness assessment

 \overline{a} 37 (Connaghan, 2009)

³⁸ (Connaghan, 2009)

between measured data and IE input for Ground 8''x18'' Wood Beam and Ground 6''x8'' Wood Beam (5.1.1 and 5.1.4 in Table 15) in last year model, which were due to a typo mistake, was corrected.

The ground level concrete stairs are on the lowest level. However, they are not included in A21 as stair structure is only included in A22 element category of modified version of CIQS. They were measured using the area condition. Concrete thickness assumed to be linear by estimating the average thickness between the crest and the trough of the step, estimated from the cross section as shown in drawing 401-06-020, as seen in Figure 5. The wood stairwells were modeled using extra basic material based on the drawing 401-06-018. Volumes calculated basic on the number of steps, the dimensions of the risers and treads, and an assumed thickness of ½". 2"x8" stringer boards were also considered in the quantity takeoff of the steps³⁹.

6.4.A23 Roof Construction

The roof of the building was made up of two wood joist sections, as seen in Figure 6. The lower portion was modeled as a wood joist roof with a span of 10ft due to IE limitations, while the upper portion was modeled as 4 separate wall sections with 2"x4" wood studs (Figure 7). In addition, for sloped sections of the "wall sections," the section was assumed to be flat. From the roof detail, cedar shiplap was added to the envelope, as well as roof asphalt based on site inspections. In addition, it was assumed there was a 6mil polyethylene layer to meet the vapor barrier requirements of a roof.

The First Floor Truss, were modeled using extra basic material. The wood, steel rod and steel sheets of the truss were modeled based on the drawing 401-06-018.

6.5.A31 Walls below Grade

Walls Below Grade includes basement level concrete walls for Tank Room, Neutralizing Tank, and

Figure 7 Four separate roof area in which their upper portion was modeled as wall sections

 39 (Connaghan, 2009)

Store room (See Drawing 406-06-016).

Basement walls on the foundation levels were modeled using linear conditions labeled based on their thickness, material, floor level and if they were interior or exterior walls (e.g. Foundation 6" Interior Concrete Wall). They were assumed to have a height of 3.5ft, based on an average of measurements from drawings 401-06-019 and 401-06-020, as well as concrete with 4000psi strength, #5 rebar reinforcement and average fly ash content⁴⁰.

Thickness of 6" and 7" was given for walls below grade, however 8" was used due to IE limitations, therefore length of the exterior wall was multiplied by a factor of (6",7"/8") for a total length of 66.00' and 69.125' to meet the concrete volume.

6.6.A32 Walls above Grade

The exterior walls on ground and first floor levels were modeled using linear conditions labeled based on their thickness, material, floor level and if they were interior or exterior walls (e.g. Ground exterior Wall). The exterior walls on the ground and first floors appeared to have no insulation installed when the building was initially constructed, and were therefore assumed to have no insulation. All doors, except for the steel vestibule which was assumed to be a 32"x7' steel interior door, were assumed to be 32"x7' solid wood doors. The windows were assumed to be fixed windows with standard glazing, and were modeled as wood frames based on site inspections. Total lath volumes for the exterior and interior walls (walls above grade and partitions) were calculated by multiplying the calculated lath volume per 1'x1' area—as seen in Table 7 with assumed lath dimensions and spacing—by the twice the total area of the wall, to account for laths on both sides of the walls. Finally, all wood stud walls with lath and plaster required $\frac{1}{2}$ " of regular gypsum to be used as a surrogate material for the plaster, with the laths modeled as extra basic material based on 4'x2"x¼" dimensions and ¼" spacing⁴¹.

In the last year model the number of windows, length of the wall, and total area of the windows in Ground and First Floor Exterior Walls (2.2.5 and 2.2.6 in Table 16) were divided by 4 (and modeled 4 times) to accommodate limits on the number of windows. As this limitation is resolved in IE version 4.2.0.208, used in this study, the IE inputs are changed to real quantities.

6.7.B11 Partitions

The interior walls on ground and first floor levels were modeled using linear conditions labeled based on their thickness, material, floor level and if they were interior or exterior walls (e.g. Ground 2"x4" Stud Interior Wall, etc.). Hallway walls were also assumed to have plywood sheathing, based on drawing 401- 06-030, a drawing from a building renovation in 1963. The doors and windows within the ground and first floor walls were modeled using count conditions. All doors were assumed to be 32"x7' solid wood doors. Finally, all wood stud walls with lath and plaster required $\frac{y}{x}$ of regular gypsum to be used as a surrogate material for the plaster, with the laths modeled as extra basic material based on 4'x2"x¼" dimensions and $\frac{1}{4}$ spacing⁴².

 \overline{a} ⁴⁰ (Connaghan, 2009)

 41 (Connaghan, 2009), (Wikipedia, n.d.)

⁴² (Connaghan, 2009), (Wikipedia, n.d.)

6.8.Bill of materials for CIQS level 3 elements

A reference flow is a quantified amount of the product(s), including product parts, necessary for a specific product system to deliver the performance described by the functional unit. The purpose of the reference flows is to translate the abstract functional unit into specific product flows for each of the compared systems, so that product alternatives are compared on an equivalent basis, reflecting the actual consequences of the potential product substitution⁴³. Geography building's bill of materials in metric units for each Level 3 Element, taken from reordered building model, in IE version 4.2.0.208, is presented in Table 7-13.

Table 10 A23 Roof Construction List of Materials

⁴³ (Weidema, Wenzel, Petersen, & Klaus Hansen, 2004)

Table 11 A31 Walls Below Grade List of Materials

Table 12 A32 Walls Above Grade List of Materials

Table 13 B11 Partitions List of Materials

7. Communication of Assessment Results

Life Cycle Results

Environmental impacts of each level 3 CIQS category is assessed by reordering and improving previously generated whole building LCA model, in IE version 4.2.0.208. IE utilizes the Athena Life Cycle Inventory (LCI) Database, in order to generate a cradle-to-grave LCI profile for the building. In this study, LCI profile results focus on the manufacturing and transportation of materials and their installation in to the initial structure and envelope assemblies. As this study is a cradle-to-gate assessment, the expected service life of the Geography Building is set to 1 year, which results in the maintenance, operating energy and end-of-life stages of the building's life cycle being left outside the scope of assessment. Table 15 summarizes the environmental impacts of Geography Building for each. Figure 8-14 illustrate hotspots for each environmental impact category among different level 3 CIQS categories. Figure 15-21 show the hotspots for each environmental impact category among different lifecycle stages.

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Table 14 Summary of environmental impact of each level 3 element

Figure 9 Fossil Fuel Consumption Comparison Between level 3 elements

Figure 10 Global Warming Comparison Between level 3 elements

Figure 11 Eutrophication Comparison Between level 3 elements

Figure 13 Smog Comparison Between level 3 elements

Figure 14 Human Health Criteria Comparison Between level 3 elements

Figure 20 Eutrophication Comparison in product and construction stage for level 3 elements

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Annex A - Interpretation of Assessment Results

Benchmark Development

There is a need for a standard against which to measure and interpret the performance of a system. This is the basis of benchmarking. It is crucial that the projects which are used to develop a benchmark have common goal & scope and model development, so that they include similar criteria in their assessments. Moreover, in comparative studies between different systems/options it is essential to define the functional equivalent. Functional equivalent is a representation of the required and quantified functional and/or technical requirement for a building or an assembled system (part of works), which is used as a basis for comparison. Functional equivalent needs to include building type, relevant technical and functional requirements, the pattern of use and the required service life⁴⁴.

UBC Academic Building Benchmark

In this study, the benchmarking for institutional building on UBC Vancouver campus where obtained by assessing the average impact for each TRACI environmental impact category per square meter of the level 3 CIQS elements and the building total area. Figures 24-30 draw comparisons between the environmental impacts of the Geography Building and the CIVL498C 2013 students' projects benchmarks for their lifecycle stages and for their level 3 elements. Figure 31 is a scatter plot of total cost and global warming potential impacts of all studies. Geography building is highlighted among the other buildings.

Figure 22 Global Warming Benchmarking for Life Cycle Stages and level 3 elements

 \overline{a} ⁴⁴ (European Commission Research & Innovation Environment, 2012; W. B. Trusty & Meil., 1999)

Figure 25 Human Health Criteria (Respiratory) Benchmarking for Life Cycle Stages and level 3 elements

Figure 27 Ozone Layer Depletion Benchmarking for Life Cycle Stages and level 3 elements

Figure 28 Smog Benchmarking for Life Cycle Stages and level 3 elements

Figure 29 Scatter plot of Total Cost and GWP impacts of CIVIL 498C 2014 studies

Anex B - Recommendations for LCA Use

LCA is a study of the environmental impacts of a system over a specific life span. The presented study was a Cradle-to-Grave (including Product and Construction stages) environmental impact analysis of the Geography Building on UBC campus. However, having a holistic perspective in LCA study is crucial, both in terms of lifecycle stages and elements included, in order to identify all the impacts and hotspots in a system. Although LCA for separate elements is helpful for having more sustainable choices in material/product selection, these studies are not enough to optimize the overall impact of a building. For instance, material with less embodied energy may be preferred in a Cradle-to-Grave LCA study, but they may be less preferred when the energy consumption in the building's use stage is included in assessments. A building LCA study, early in the design stage will significantly affect the material/component, or service selection decisions. More over an LCA study for an existing building can help making efficient decisions to improve the building's performance.

In order to have an accurate LCA study, a detailed region specific LCI database is required, so that the environmental impacts of products and systems are assessed based on location characteristics such as available technology, distances, energy type, environmental sensitivity of the place, etc. Institutes such as Athena and NREL have already developed a thorough database for North America's regions. However, as the interest in using LCA method in the construction industry increases, more studies will be

conducted on building products and buildings. Using these case studies, more comprehensive region specific LCI databases will be created. Also benchmark for different building types and functions will be developed against which buildings' performance can be assessed. Incorporating LCA in building assessment certifications, such as including it in the latest version of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Certification (LEED v.4) can significantly help promoting the use of LCA in building $industry⁴⁵$.

A challenge in LCA is how to interpret the results. The results of an LCA study are presented as midpoint environmental impact categories, which are not connected to each other in the way they are reported. Thus, different studies may prioritize the impact categories differently based on the sensitivity of the context, study goals, or even personal benefits. To make the study result more reliable, a third party institute can conduct region specific studies to identify the categories which may have more significant impact or sensitivity in that place and assign weightings to the impact categories based on that analysis.

UBC has high environmental goals and its campus is considered as a living laboratory for the technological, environmental, economic and societal aspects of sustainability⁴⁶. Such ambitions make UBC a perfect place for actively applying and developing LCA methods in design, maintenance, and renovation of different building types on campus. The first step is to develop a database of different building on campus to create a benchmark for assessment and comparison purposes. This initiation has already been started in CIVL 498C course. However, as these studies are done mainly by undergraduate students who do not have much expertise in LCA, it is necessary that these studies be reviewed and improved by LCA professionals. Moreover, this database can be sorted and categorize for different purposes. For instance, old buildings can have their own category for comparison and renovation/improvement decision makings.

Annex C - Author Reflection

The first time I read about LCA was in 2011 when I was conducting a research on incorporating the recycling value of construction materials in building assessment systems, such as LEED⁴⁷. Through that study I realized that current material assessment methods and strategies incorporated in building rating systems are more focused on upstream impacts, mainly operation stage and more recently production stage. They mainly do not consider the building or product's whole lifecycle in their assessment. Thus, they may not be able to help the stakeholders choose the best product/service for their projects. I also read about LCA challenges and uncertainties in regard to how to allocate environmental impacts to different functional units of a system, how to predict the end of life of a system, and also the lack of a comprehensive region specific LCI database.

Currently I am a graduate student at UBC in Master of Advanced Studies in architecture (MASA) program. In my thesis I am studying the influence of different stakeholders' priorities on extending useful lifetime of construction materials. Sometimes the environmental benefits of these strategies are

 \overline{a} ⁴⁵ (Todd, 2013)

⁴⁶ (UBC Sustainability, 2013)

⁴⁷ (Saghafi & Hosseini Teshnizi, 2011)

not in line with influential stakeholders' priorities/benefits, involved in different stages of construction products lifecycle, thus stakeholders do not put so much effort into applying them. In my case studies, I am studying lifecycle costs/benefits of construction products and allocating them to different stakeholders involved in products lifecycle. I was highly interested to know the details of LCA methods and how they actually assess and assign different environmental impacts. It was not easy to understand it just by reading the publications. Thus I audited the CIVL 498C course to experience using LCA methods for a building.

During the course I realized that getting involved in details of LCA study is so challenging and different from the concept of the LCA. I learned to deal with detailed quantities of materials used in a building and incorporate them in modeling softwares to obtain LCA environmental result. This experience greatly helped me to understand the importance and challenges of LCA.

Annex D – Impact Estimator Inputs and Assumptions

Table 15 Level 3 Sorted Impact Estimator Inputs

Table 16 Level 3 Sorted Assumptions

Table 17 Ground Lecture Room Stairs

Table 22 Extra wood for the first floor truss

Total V= 6.490 ft3 Total W= 3173.562 lbs Total W= 1.587 tons

Table 24 First Floor Truss steel Plates