# Greendelta

sustainability consulting + software

# Adapting LCA software to LCI databases and vice versa

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## **GreenDelta**, what we do

"The art of sustainability consulting"

- sustainability research
- life cycle assessments
- databases
- software for LCA and sustainability



# openLCA framework



- openLCA
- openLCA Nexus
- openLCA format converter
- Other tools based on openLCA core:
  - PROSUITE Decision Support Tool
  - Waste Reduction Model (WARM) Tool
  - Sustainable Materials Management (SMM) Tool
  - BASF-BEST









Adapting LCA software and databases



Examples: ecoinvent v.3, ELCD, PSILCA

 $\rightarrow$  Focus on openLCA

 The issue of the elementary flows and LCIA methods in different software



## **Databases used in examples**



ecoinvent is the most famous LCA database worldwide used by around 4,500 users in more than 40 countries. The database contains international industrial life cycle inventory data on multiple sectors.



European reference Life Cycle Database comprises LCI data from EU-level business associations and other sources for key materials, energy carriers, transport, and waste management



PSILCA is a new database for social LCA developed by GreenDelta. It contains comprehensive generic inventory information for almost 15,000 industry sectors and commodities, for calculating and assessing social impacts of products along their life cycles

# Adapting LCA software and databases

### Formats

### e.g. ILCD in ELCD ecoSpold2 in ecoinvent v.3



openLCA → Implementation of ILCD and ecoSpold2 interfaces (for import and export)

- API created to import and export ILCD and ecoSpold2
- olca-io created to map the format to the database



### Products with multiple providers

#### e.g. ecoinvent v.3

Same product, multiple possible providers (activityLinkId = Default provider)

# SimaPro → Not possible (Products are always unique)

Status	Name
None	Electricity, low voltage {CA-NS}   market for   Alloc Def, U
None	Electricity, low voltage {CA-NT}   market for   Alloc Def, U
None	Electricity, low voltage {CA-NU}  market for   Alloc Def, U

#### GaBi $\rightarrow$ Possible, but only LCI datasets included

#### Products with multiple providers

#### e.g. ecoinvent v.3

OpenLCA 1.4 → Possible, but a product could not be used several times in the same process with different providers (typical in ecoinvent 3)

Fe electricity, high voltage | electricity production, nuclear, pressure water reactor - WECC, US only

Fe electricity, high voltage | electricity production, nuclear, pressure water reactor - ZA

Fe electricity, high voltage | electricity production, peat - EE

Fe electricity, high voltage | electricity production, peat - FI

Fe electricity, high voltage | electricity production, peat - IE

Fe electricity, high voltage | electricity production, peat - RoW

Fe electricity, high voltage | electricity production, peat - RU

Fe electricity, high voltage | electricity production, peat - SE

Fe electricity, high voltage | electricity production, wind, <1MW turbine, onshore - ASCC

Fe electricity, high voltage | electricity production, wind, <1MW turbine, onshore - AT

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#### Products with multiple providers

#### e.g. ecoinvent v.3



# openLCA 1.5 $\rightarrow$ Possible to use a product with different providers in the same process

- ✓ 3510:Electric power generation, transmission and distribution
  - > = 3510a: Electric power generation based on liquid fuels
    - 3510b: Electric power generation, photovoltaic
    - Fe blast furnace gas
    - Fe coal gas
    - Fa electricity, high voltage
    - Fe electricity, high voltage, aluminium industry
    - Fe electricity, high voltage, for internal use in coal mining
    - Fe electricity, high voltage, label-certified
    - Fe electricity, low voltage
    - Fe electricity, low voltage, label-certified

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#### Products with multiple providers

#### e.g. ecoinvent v.3



# openLCA 1.5 $\rightarrow$ Possible to use a product with different providers in the same process

#### Inputs

Flow Felectricity, high voltage	Category 351:Electric power g	Amount 1.00000	Unit MJ	Costs	Uncertainty none	Provider P market for electricity, high
Ferice	011:Growing of non	1.00000	📟 kg		none	rice production - CN 🗸
						market for rice - GLO
						rice production - CN
						rice production - IN rice production - RoW rice production - US

#### Products without provider

#### e.g. ELCD



# SimaPro $\rightarrow$ Not possible (product = process)

#### Known inputs from technosphere (electricity/heat)

Name

Dummy secondary fuel

Dummy secondary fuel renewable

(Insert line he

Status	Name
Finished	Dummy BF Gas Sludge
Finished	Dummy BF Shop Dust
Finished	Dummy BF Slag
Finished	Dummy BOF Gas Dust
Finished	Dummy BOF Slag
Finished	Dummy CaF2 (low radioactice)
Finished	Dummy carbonyl sulphide

#### Products without provider

### e.g. **ELCD**

GaBi, openLCA → Possible (product flow will be listed in the inventory results)



In openLCA, in order to simplify the creation of the product system to the user, dummy processes are set as default providers

#### **Connections between different products**

### e.g. ELCD (transport modelling: cargo)

# GaBi → Possible (only manual creation of product systems [plans])



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#### **Connections between different products**

### e.g. ELCD (transport modelling: cargo)

SimaPro → Not possible (unique products (ecoinvent transport modelling): automatic creation of product systems)

Known outputs to technosphere. Products and co-products		
Name	Amount	L
Plane, technology mix, cargo, 68 t payload GLO	1	ł
(Insert line here)		
Known inputs from technosphere (materials/fuels)		
Name	Amount	
Dummy cargo	1	
Kerosene, from crude oil, consumption mix, at refinery, 700 ppm sulphur EU-15 S	1*Spec_Consum	= 2,68

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#### **Connections between different products**

### e.g. ELCD (transport modelling: cargo)

openLCA → Not possible, but intermediate processes can be created (or ecoinvent transport modelling)





#### Loops due to self-referencing activities

#### e.g. ecoinvent v.3

#### Process: market for electricity, low voltage | electricity, low voltage | APOS, U

#### Inputs

Flow	Unit	Provider
Felectricity, low voltage	🕮 kWh	P electricity production, photovoltaic, 3kWp slanted-roof installation, single-Si, panel, i
Feelectricity, low voltage	📟 kWh	P market for electricity, low voltage   electricity, low voltage   APOS, U - AU
te sultur hexatluoride, liquid	📟 kg	P market for sulfur hexafluoride, liquid   sulfur hexafluoride, liquid   APOS, U - GLO
Reelectricity, low voltage	📟 kWh	P electricity production, photovoltaic, 3kWp slanted-roof installation, multi-Si, panel, n
Fe distribution network, elect	📟 km	P market for distribution network, electricity, low voltage   distribution network, electric
Feelectricity, low voltage	📟 kWh	P electricity voltage transformation from medium to low voltage   electricity, low volta
Feelectricity, low voltage	📟 kWh	P electricity production, photovoltaic, 570kWp open ground installation, multi-Si   elec

#### · Outputs

Flow	Category	Amount	Unit	Costs/Rev	Uncertainty	Avoided p	Ped
Reelectricity, low voltage	351:Electric power g	1.00000	📟 kWh	0.10700 E	none		

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#### Loops due to self-referencing activities

#### e.g. ecoinvent v.3

### SimaPro → it can calculate self-loops



#### Loops due to self-referencing activities



#### openLCA $\rightarrow$ Exchanges are merged during the import

#### Process: market for electricity, low voltage | electricity, low voltage | APOS, U

#### Inputs

Flow	Unit	Provider
Fe electricity, low voltage	📟 kWh	P electricity production, photovoltaic, 570kWp open ground installation, multi-Si   electricity, low
Fe electricity, low voltage	📟 kWh	P electricity voltage transformation from medium to low voltage   electricity, low voltage   APOS,
Fe electricity, low voltage	📟 kWh	P electricity production, photovoltaic, 3kWp slanted-roof installation, single-Si, panel, mounted
Fe distribution network, elect	📟 km	P market for distribution network, electricity, low voltage   distribution network, electricity, low vo
Fasulfur hexafluoride, liquid	📟 kg	P market for sulfur hexafluoride, liquid   sulfur hexafluoride, liquid   APOS, U - GLO
Feelectricity, low voltage	📟 kWh	P electricity production, photovoltaic, 3kWp slanted-roof installation, multi-Si, panel, mounted   e

#### Outputs

Flow	Category	Amount	Unit	Costs/Revenues	Uncertainty	Avoided
Fe electricity, low voltage	351:Electric power generation, transm	0.97910	📼 kWh	0.10700 EUR	none	

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#### ActivityLinkId specified in the ecoSpold2 files refers to an activity where the product flow is an input

#### e.g. ecoinvent v.3

#### "residual wood, dry" consumed by "market for residual wood, dry - GLO"

Provider: "shavings, hardwood, measured as dry mass to generic market for residual wood, dry - GLO" where "residual wood, dry" is a positive input provided by "market for residual wood, dry - GLO"

# "venting of nitrogen, liquid" consumed by "market for venting of nitrogen, liquid - GLO"

Provider: "venting of nitrogen, liquid - RER" where "venting of nitrogen, liquid" is a positive input provided by "market for venting of nitrogen, liquid - GLO"

#### ActivityLinkId specified in the ecoSpold2 files refers to an activity where the product flow is an input

#### e.g. ecoinvent v.3

Recommendation from ecoinvent: delete those exchanges in the database

ocess: market for res	idual wood, dry	/					
Inputs							
Flow	Category	Unit	Uncertainty	Provider			
Feresidual wood, dry	162:Manufacture o	📼 m3	none				
Fetransport, freight, lorry, u	492:Other land tra	📟 t*km	lognorma	P market for transport, freight, lorry, unspecified - GLO			
Outputs							
Flow	Category	Amount	Unit	Costs/Revenues	Uncertainty	Avoided p	Pedigree u
Feresidual wood, dry	162:Manufacture o	1.00000	📟 m3	26.90000 EUR	none		

#### Inputs as reference flows + Downstream connections

### e.g. ELCD (waste modelling)

GaBi → any flow can be the reference (even no reference flow needed) and downstream connections possible

SimaPro → specific type of exchange "waste to treatment" and process type "Waste treatment"



#### Inputs as reference flows + Downstream connections

### e.g. ELCD (waste modelling)

openLCA → Reference flow must exist and be an output product. Connections downstream of the reference process not possible



ecoinvent v.3 approach implemented:

- Wastes moved to the input side with negative amount in process producing them
- Wastes moved to the output side with negative amount in the waste treatment GreenDelta



#### Inputs as reference flows + Downstream connections

### e.g. ELCD (waste modelling)



In future openLCA versions → linking and calculation algorithms modified to allow this kind of modelling

Content that requires changes in the software's database schema and UI

#### e.g. PSILCA (social aspects and indicators)



openLCA → New element "Social indicator" added to the database, and new tab "Social aspects" in the process editor

#### Social indicator: Children in employment, total

• General inf	ormation								
Name	Children	dren in employment, total							
Description	Explanat	Explanation of unit of measurement: Percentage of all children ages 7-14							
Category	Worke	ers > Child labour							
Version	01.00.000								
UUID	041068c	0-4553-40ba-88de-70e2d9a2239a							
Last change	2016-02-2	23T11:09:35+0100							
Additional	informati	on							
Unit of meas	urement	% of children							
Evaluation sc	heme	0% = no risk; 0%-<2,5% = very low risk; 2,5%-<5% = low risk; 5%-<10% = medium risk; 10%-<20% = high risk; >=20% = very high risk; n.a. = no data							

- Activity	Activity variable							
Name	Working hours							
Quantity	垫 Duration							
Unit	m h							

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Name	Raw value	Risk level	Activity variable	Data qua	Comment	Source
🔺 🖿 Workers						
🛛 🖿 Child labour						
Freedom of association and collective bargaining	J					
🚢 Trade union density	26.0705910031997 [%]	High risk	0.00882159891	(2;3;5;1;4)	Data from: 1998; La	🕮 ILOstat 2014: Trade union membership
Right of Collective bargaining	3.0 [Score]	No risk	0.00882159891	(2;3;4;1;4)	Data from: 2011; La	ICTWSS 2013
🚢 Right to Strike	3.0 [Score]	No risk	0.00882159891	(2;3;4;1;4)	Data from: 2011; La	ICTWSS 2013
Right of Association	3.0 [Score]	No risk	0.00882159891	(2;3;4;1;4)	Data from: 2011; La	ICTWSS 2013
🔺 🖿 Fair Salary						
🚢 Sector average wage, per month	2301.725743952193 [USD]	Medium risk	0.00882159891	(2;2;5;1;1)	Risk level referring t	💷 ILOstat 2014
🚢 Minimum wage, per month	1400.0 [USD]	Very low risk	0.00882159891	(2;3;1;1;2)	Data scope: country	<sup>(1)</sup> WageIndicator 2014: Minimum wage
🚢 Living wage, per month	883.9134859535415 [USD]	High risk	0.00882159891	(2;2;4;2;n.a.)	Mean over different	<sup>(1)</sup> WageIndicator 2014: Living wage
🔺 🗮 Working time						
Weekly hours of work per employee	29.885 [h]	High risk	0.00882159891	(2;1;2;1;3)	Data from: 2013; La	🕮 ILOstat 2014
🔺 📒 Health and Safety (Workers)						
Workers affected by natural disasters	0.007852687440725469 [%]	Very low risk	0.00882159891	(2;1;2;1;4)	Data from: 2014; La	🕮 EM-DAT 2015: Natural disasters
Presence of sufficient safety measures		No data	0.00882159891			
🚢 Rate of non-fatal accidents at workplace	2738.0 [#/yr and 100k empl.]	High risk	0.00882159891	(2;3;4;1;3)	Data from: 2010; La	🕮 ILOstat 2014: Fatal accidents
🚢 DALYs due to indoor and outdoor air and wate	e 0.768970284461878 [DALY rate]	Very low risk	0.00882159891	(2;1;5;1;4)	Data from: 2004; La	WHO 2009: DALYs
Rate of fatal accidents at workplace	1.77 [#/yr and 100k empl.]	Very low risk	0.00882159891	(2;3;4;1;3)	Data from: 2010; La	ILOstat 2014: Non-fatal accidents
🔺 🖿 Social benefits, legal issues						
🚢 Social security expenditures	18.575 [% of GDP]	Low risk	0.00882159891	(2;1;4;1;4)	Mean value over av	ILO 2015: Social Security
Evidence of violations of laws and employment	r 13.275600375197483 [# per 1k empl.]	High risk	0.00882159891	(2;1;1;5;2)	Data from: 2015; La	USDOL 2015: Violations of employment r
🔺 📒 Discrimination						
🚢 Gender wage gap	16.8316831683168 [%]	Medium risk	0.00882159891	(3;1;5;1;1)	Data from 2008	🕮 ILOstat 2014
🔺 📒 Forced Labour						
Goods produced by forced labour		No data	0.00882159891			
Trafficking in persons	1.0 [Tier]	Very low risk	0.00882159891	(2;1;1;1;4)	Data from: 2014; La	🕮 U.S. Department of State 2014: Traffickin
Frequency of forced labour	1.5 [‰]	Very low risk	0.00882159891	(2;4;3;3;n.a.)	Data from: 2012; La	<sup>III</sup> ILO 2012: Forced Labour
🔺 🛄 Value Chain Actors						
Corruption						
Active involvement of enterprises in corruption	n 1.0 [%]	Very low risk	0.00882159891	(2;2;2;3)	Data from: 2014; La	CECD 2014: Bribery
Public sector corruption	79.0 [Score]	Low risk	0.00882159891	(2;1;3;1;n.a.)	Data from: 2012; La	Irransparency International 2012: Corrupti

Content that requires changes in the software's database schema and UI

### e.g. PSILCA (social aspects and indicators)



SimaPro → No new element added in the database or UI. Information of each social indicator repeated in all the elementary flows of that indicator. e.g.:

Social indicator: Risk of child labor Elementary flows: Risk of child labor, no risk Risk of child labor, low risk etc.

Content that requires changes in the software's database schema and UI

### e.g. ecoinvent v.3.3 (exchanges descriptions)



openLCA  $\rightarrow$  New field "description" added in the database and in the Inputs/Outputs tab of the process editor

Inputs								<b>0</b> X 121
Flow	Category	Am	Unit	Co	Uncertainty	Provider	Pedigree u.	Description
Fe Water, cooling, unspecifie	Resource/in water	0.05	🚥 m3		lognormal		(3;5;5;1;3)	Literature Value Edit
Fe cleft timber, measured as	022:Logging/0220:	2.40	📟 kg	0.1	lognormal	P market	(3;4;5;3;3)	kg dry mass, including bark; 0.00512
Feelectricity, medium voltage	351:Electric power	0.07	📟 kWh	(0	lognormal	P market	(3;4;5;3;1)	EcoSpold01Location=UCTE
Fe heat, central or small-scal	382:Waste treatme	0.72	🚥 MJ	(0	lognormal	P market	(3;4;5;3;1)	EcoSpold01Location=CH
Fe cleft timber, measured as	022:Logging/0220:	0.10	📟 kg	0.0	lognormal	P market	(3;4;5;3;3)	kg dry mass, including bark; 0.00512
Fe cleft timber, measured as	022:Logging/0220:	0.01	📟 kg	0.0	lognormal	P market	(3;4;5;3;3)	kg dry mass, including bark; 0.00512

Content that requires changes in the software's database schema and UI

e.g. ecoinvent v.3.3 (PDF and weblinks per process)



openLCA → New function to open links directly from the source editor

• Additional i	nformation	
URL	https://v33.ecoquery.ecoinvent.org/Details/PDF/B461E679-C03E-4E69-8728-4839266738E5/06590A66-662A-4885-8494-AD0CF410F956	@ Open
Text reference		
Year		
File	Browse	

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Content that requires changes in the software's database schema and UI

e.g. ecoinvent v.3.3 (flow properties per exchange)

Flow properties (water content etc.): in ecoinvent linked to an exchange, in openLCA and ILCD linked to a flow



openLCA → Not implemented. Data lost during the import

Content that requires changes in the import function only applicable to a specific database e.g. **ecoinvent v.3 (parameters)** 

- Mathematical formulas from reference products refer to the undefined system
- Livelinks used in the mathematical formulas
- Formulas > 2000 characters (limit in openLCA), etc.

```
<comment xml:lang="en">calculated from mass balance</comment>
</uncertainty>
</uncertainty>
</property propertyId="335fb25a-49eb-4a6c-8c28-9a19d16c9456" variableName="amount_ash_calc_prop_kg"
amount="0.00748" isDefiningValue="false" mathematicalRelation="LiveLink('C:\Documents and Settings\treyer_k\My
Documents\ecoinvent\EcoEditor\LiveLinks\electricity_production_hard_coal_LiveLinks.xls','Sheet1','C19','',
'Automatic')" isCalculatedAmount="true" unitId="487df68b-4994-4027-8fdc-a4dc298257b7" sourceId="6ad10bdb-
b629-4991-94a9-478b752cde90" sourceYear="2007" sourceFirstAuthor="Röder, A.">

(unitName_unitLang="en">calculation property, kg
```

Content that requires changes in the import function only applicable to a specific database e.g. **ecoinvent v.3 (parameters)** 

→ openLCA, SimaPro → Mathematical formulas
imported





#### e.g. ecoinvent v.3

New types of process data sets, for markets, that typically link one process with another

→ a drastically increased in number of data sets in one typical product system (with the same number of LCA process data sets).



#### e.g. ecoinvent v.3

Issue: Memory space requirements in a matrix calculation  $\rightarrow$  cubic increase with the number of data sets



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#### e.g. ecoinvent v.3

Tasks:

- Reduction of memory space requirements
- Faster loading of product systems
- Faster calculation





#### e.g. ecoinvent v.3

Performance improvements due to

- Improved data structures
- Improved queries (batching)
- Improved memory usage (caching)
- Improved algorithms and a faster numerical library



Memory space requirements (ecoinvent 2.2)

openLCA 1.3: Product system open: 200 MB Analysis peak: 450 MB Product system & result open: 250 MB





Memory space requirements (ecoinvent 2.2)

openLCA 1.4: Product system open: 25 MB Analysis peak: 300 MB Product system & result open: 125 MB





Memory space requirements (ecoinvent 3.01)

openLCA 1.4: **Product system open:** 25 MB Analysis peak: 1100 MB Product system & result open: 125 MB





#### Performance (openLCA 1.3 vs. 1.4)

Action	Ecoinve	Ecoinvent v.3.01	
Action	openLCA 1.3	openLCA 1.4	openLCA 1.4
Creating a new product system	72 s	3 s	13 S
Opening an existing product system	8 s	< 1 5	<1 S
Calculation and Analysis	10 S	4 S	17 S





#### Performance (openLCA 1.4.2, ecoinvent v.3.2)





#### e.g. PSILCA

#### Number of processes





#### e.g. PSILCA

#### Number of process links (in millions)





#### e.g. PSILCA

#### Required RAM (GB)







e.g. PSILCA

#### Cut-offs in available databases

Database	openLCA	SimaPro
PSILCA Developer	No cut-off	Not Available
PSILCA Professional	1E-7	Not Available
PSILCA Starter	1E-5	Not Available
PSILCA Starter (SimaPro)	Not Available	1E-4



e.g. PSILCA

Future modification of the software:

 Store pre-calculated matrices of background systems as libraries to reduce significantly the time of calculation and memory requirements



## The issue of the elementary flows and LCIA methods

# "Old" issue still unresolved

### The issue

The same dataset characterized with the same LCIA method can yield very different results in different LCA software

#### The cause

Different elementary flows used in the software, LCI databases and LCIA methods

- →Different mappings applied
- $\rightarrow$  Different intrepretation of LCIA methods

Publications: Herrmann and Moltesen, 2015; Speck et al., 2015

# Lack of harmonization in elementary flows

- Different flow nomenclature
- Lack of clarifiers (e.g. synonyms, CAS numbers, formulas, etc.)
- Different definition of context (i.e. compartment, subcompartment information)
- Misspelling, capitalization differences, etc.

#### $\rightarrow$ All makes more difficult the creation of mappings

# Lack of harmonization in elementary flows

Source	Flow name	CAS	Flow context	
ecoinvent	Butylcarbamate,	55406-	Air - non-urban air or from	
V.3.2	iodopropynyl	53-6	high stacks	
openLCA	3-lodo-2-propynyl	055406-	Air - low population densi	
	butylcarbamate	53-6	All – low population density	
SimaPro	Butylcarbamate,		Emissions to air – low. pop.	
	iodopropynyl	-		
GaBi	Butylcarbamate		Emissions to air – Organic	
	iodopropypyl		emissions to air (group VOC)	
	ισασρισργηγι		<ul> <li>– Group NMVOC to air</li> </ul>	
ILCD	3-iodo-2-propynyl	055406- 53-6	Emissions – Emissions to air	
			– Emissions to non-urban air	
	DutyicarDamate		or from high stacks	

## **Impact in LCIA results**



## Impact in LCIA results: Global Warming



# Impact in LCIA results: Abiotic depletion (elements)



# Impact in LCIA results: Abiotic depletion (elements)

- GaBi includes so-called "obsolete" characterization factors (CFs): Barium sulphate, Cinnabar, Colamanite ore, Borax, Gypsum, Antimonite, Sodium chloride, Sodium sulphate, Spodumen
- GaBi CF 100x lower for cadmium
- Mismatch in GaBi nomenclature for Uranium

# Impact in LCIA results: Abiotic depletion (fossil fuels)



# Impact in LCIA results: Abiotic depletion (fossil fuels)



# Impact in LCIA results: Acidification potential



# Impact in LCIA results: Acidification potential



# Impact in LCIA results: Acidification potential

#### CIRAIG analysis (2014, Pascal Lesage)

**Characterisation factors** 



## Impact in LCIA results: CML results CIRAIG analysis (2014, Pascal Lesage)



## But there is hope...

#### Global LCA Data Access network (GLAD) – UNEP

Nomenclature Working Group, deliverables:

- Agreed mapping system
- Critical review of nomenclature systems
- Principles for maintenance and update of the flow list
- Principles for the harmonization of processes nomenclature and taxonomy

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# Thank you!

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