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Press release

Encouraging to use LCAs to improve environmental performance is better than waiting for the perfect tool

Brussels, 20 June 2022 – FEDIOL, the vegetable oil and proteinmeal industry, held its annual event on Friday 17 June on the theme, *Transitioning to sustainable food systems: The role of environmental life cycle assessment* after having released this week the [study](#) on environmental footprint (PEF) profiles of vegetable oil and protein meal products¹. Commenting on industry's role in advancing on the European Green Deal, President Jordi Costa highlighted the industry's challenges, amplified by the war in Ukraine. He acknowledged that the crisis had been changing perception: *"It is putting priorities upside down. Global food security is potentially at stake."* But he also added that food products will have to continue reducing their environmental impact and contributing to the goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. Sustainable goods and business models should become the norm and environmental considerations need to be integrated in corporate decision-making. *"We are actively working at anticipating developments and are engaged across the supply chain to improve practices"*, he said, *"and our sector can be part of the solutions."*

Acknowledging the FEDIOL sector's contribution and important role at the beginning of the chain, Claire Bury, Deputy Director General in DG Santé, highlighted in a keynote address that *"the framework for an EU sustainable food system, which the Commission will present on the second half of 2023, envisages to set principles and definitions on the key characteristics of a sustainable food system, encompassing the three dimensions essential to it: environmental, social and economic aspects."* She further stressed in the discussion that *"the upcoming framework will be filled in progressively with details"*. Innovations such as NGTs and how they improve sustainability will be key. It will further require communicating to consumers to shape consumers' demand for sustainable food.

The Conference held by FEDIOL on Friday 17 June also aimed at shedding light on the state of maturity of LCA methods, Product Environmental Footprint in particular, and to discuss their assets or limitations for possible use in policy making. Different representative stakeholders commented that LCA methods, although not perfect, were providing a highly valuable harmonized assessment of environmental performance. They were a basis for voluntary communication about the environmental performance of products in business-to-business relations and should be used in this sense. Claims referring to the environmental benefits or the improvement of environmental performance should, however, be substantiated with robust data. Speakers called for caution about apparent simple solutions for communicating about environmental performance which may be misleading or provide biased information that is not substantiated.

Note to the editors:

FEDIOL is the European association representing the vegetable oil and protein meal industry. The sector covers more than 180 facilities belonging to ±70 companies in 17 EU countries and directly employs 20,000 people. Its members process oilseeds, refine and bottle vegetable oils.

¹ For more information, visit FEDIOL [website](#)