

# Green Supply Chain Design Using Lifecycle Emissions Assessment Models

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## Article Info

Volume 5, Issue 4

Page Number : 296-328

## Publication Issue :

July-August-2022

## Article History

Accepted : 20 July 2022

Published : 30 July 2022

## ABSTRACT :

Green supply chain design has emerged as a critical approach for achieving environmental sustainability and reducing the carbon footprint of industrial operations. This study explores the integration of Lifecycle Emissions Assessment Models (LCAM) into the design and optimization of green supply chains, offering a comprehensive method for quantifying and minimizing environmental impacts across all stages of the product lifecycle. By applying LCAM, the research evaluates emissions generated during raw material extraction, manufacturing, distribution, usage, and end-of-life disposal. The objective is to develop a decision-support framework that enables organizations to identify environmentally optimal supply chain configurations without compromising economic viability. A multi-stage model is constructed to incorporate emissions data into supply chain design decisions, using case studies from the automotive and electronics sectors. The study adopts a mixed-method approach, combining process-based lifecycle analysis with optimization techniques to compare alternative sourcing, production, and distribution strategies. Results reveal that upstream activities such as raw material sourcing and transportation significantly contribute to total lifecycle emissions. Furthermore, the analysis indicates that integrating renewable energy, localized sourcing, and reverse logistics can lead to a substantial reduction in overall carbon emissions and environmental impact. The proposed framework supports decision-makers in embedding sustainability into core supply chain strategies by providing measurable insights into emissions trade-offs. It also facilitates compliance with international environmental regulations and corporate social responsibility goals. The study emphasizes the importance of data accuracy, cross-functional collaboration, and digital tools such as emissions tracking software and AI-driven analytics in enabling effective

implementation. By bridging the gap between lifecycle assessment and supply chain design, this research contributes to the advancement of environmentally responsible supply chain practices. Future work may extend the model to incorporate social impact metrics and real-time carbon accounting systems. This work underscores the critical role of LCAM in transitioning toward greener, more resilient, and ethically aligned supply chains in the context of global climate objectives.

**Keywords:** Green Supply Chain, Lifecycle Emissions Assessment, Sustainable Logistics, Carbon Footprint, Environmental Impact, Lifecycle Analysis, Reverse Logistics, Supply Chain Optimization, Emissions Modeling, Eco-Efficiency.

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## 1.0. Introduction

Climate change and environmental degradation have become urgent global challenges, largely driven by industrial activity and the operations of expansive supply chains. As production and distribution processes grow in complexity and scale, so does their environmental footprint manifesting in high greenhouse gas emissions, resource depletion, and waste generation. Traditional supply chain models, which prioritize cost-efficiency and speed, often overlook the environmental consequences of sourcing, manufacturing, logistics, usage, and end-of-life disposal (Adelusi, Ojika & Uzoka, 2022, Chianumba, et al., 2022). As governments, organizations, and consumers increasingly recognize the need for sustainability, there is a growing demand for strategies that minimize ecological harm while maintaining economic viability.

In response to this growing awareness, Green Supply Chain Design (GSCD) has emerged as a transformative approach that seeks to embed environmental considerations into every aspect of the supply chain. GSCD extends beyond simple compliance or green branding; it involves a fundamental rethinking of how products are sourced, produced, distributed, consumed, and disposed of. The goal is to design systems that are efficient, circular, and low-emission, aligning supply chain management with broader sustainability goals. This shift necessitates a move away from fragmented environmental assessments toward more integrated, data-driven decision-making frameworks (Adelusi, Ojika & Uzoka, 2022, Fagbore, et al., 2022).

A critical tool in achieving this integration is the Lifecycle Emissions Assessment Model (LCAM), which provides a systematic approach to quantifying environmental impacts across all stages of a product's life. LCAM enables decision-makers to understand the cumulative emissions associated with each component of the supply chain from raw material extraction and production to transportation, usage, and final disposal. By leveraging these insights, organizations can identify emissions hotspots, evaluate alternative design and sourcing options, and implement strategies that reduce overall carbon footprints without sacrificing performance or profitability (Adelusi, Ojika & Uzoka, 2022, Chianumba, et al., 2022).

This study aims to develop and apply a framework that incorporates LCAM into the green supply chain design process. The objective is to demonstrate how lifecycle emissions data can be systematically integrated into supply chain decision-making to enhance environmental performance. The paper is structured as follows: a review of literature on green supply chains and lifecycle assessment methods; an explanation of the research methodology; the development of a green supply chain design model using LCAM; a case study application; and a concluding section discussing key findings and future directions (Adelusi, Ojika & Uzoka, 2022, Forkuo, et al., 2022).

## 2.1. Literature Review

Green supply chain design (GSCD) has gained increasing attention as industries strive to reduce their environmental impact and align operations with sustainable development goals. Traditional supply chain models, primarily developed to optimize cost, speed, and service levels, have historically paid little attention to environmental consequences. These conventional models often rely on centralized production, global sourcing, and high-throughput logistics that maximize economic efficiency but result in significant greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, resource depletion, and waste generation (Adewale, Olorunyomi & Odonkor, 2021, Fredson, et al, 2021). Such approaches prioritize linearity resources are extracted, processed, used, and discarded without mechanisms for environmental feedback, reuse, or emission control.

In contrast, green supply chain design shifts the paradigm by embedding sustainability principles into every stage of the supply chain, from raw material acquisition to end-of-life product management. GSCD emphasizes the integration of environmental concerns into traditional supply chain decision-making processes such as procurement, manufacturing, distribution, and reverse logistics. The objective is not merely to comply with environmental regulations but to proactively minimize negative ecological effects through design innovation, responsible sourcing, energy efficiency, and closed-loop systems (Olajide, et al., 2021, Onaghinor, Uzozie & Esan, 2021). This shift has been largely driven by mounting regulatory pressure, increasing consumer awareness, and stakeholder demand for corporate environmental responsibility.

A fundamental tool that supports this transformation is the Lifecycle Assessment (LCA), which offers a comprehensive method to quantify and evaluate the environmental impacts of a product, process, or system throughout its entire lifecycle. In the context of supply chains, LCA enables a holistic view of emissions and resource use, capturing not only direct impacts from production activities but also upstream and downstream effects. This makes LCA particularly valuable for green supply chain design, as it provides the necessary data to identify emission-intensive activities, assess alternative configurations, and support evidence-based decision-making (Adewale, Olorunyomi & Odonkor, 2021, Isa, Johnbull & Ovenseri, 2021).

Lifecycle Emissions Assessment Models (LCAM) are an application of LCA principles specifically tailored to measure emissions across supply chain networks. These models support the quantification of carbon footprints, energy consumption, and waste generation associated with different supply chain activities,

including raw material extraction, production, transportation, product usage, and end-of-life disposal. LCAM helps decision-makers compare alternative scenarios such as different sourcing locations, transport modes, or manufacturing technologies based on their environmental performance (Adewale, Olorunyomi & Odonkor, 2022, Chianumba, et al., 2022).

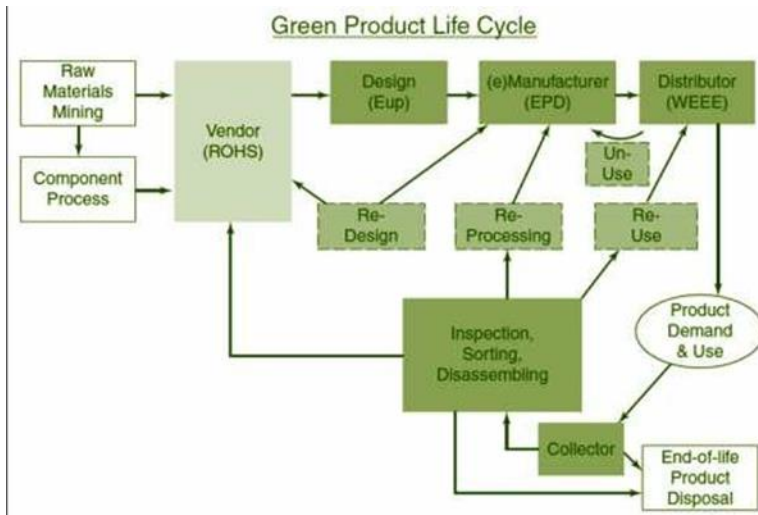
Several methodologies are used to implement LCAM, each with its strengths and limitations. The process-based approach is one of the most common, relying on detailed input-output data from specific processes or activities. This bottom-up method provides granular insights and is useful for comparing discrete alternatives, such as evaluating different materials or transportation options. However, it can be time-consuming and data-intensive, often limited by system boundaries and data availability (Olajide, et al., 2021, Oluoha, et al., 2021).

The input-output approach, in contrast, adopts a top-down perspective using national or regional economic and environmental accounts. It provides a broader overview of environmental impacts associated with sectors and economic activities, making it useful for macro-level assessments and policy analysis. Nevertheless, its high-level nature means that it lacks specificity, and may not accurately capture the details of specific supply chain operations (Onifade, et al., 2022, Oyeyemi, 2022, Ozobu, et al., 2022).

Hybrid approaches attempt to combine the strengths of both process-based and input-output models. These models integrate detailed process data with broader economic relationships to provide a more comprehensive and scalable assessment. While hybrid methods are increasingly recognized for their robustness and versatility, they also pose challenges in terms of data harmonization, model complexity, and methodological transparency (Afrihyiav, et al., 2022, Chianumba, et al., 2022).

Key environmental indicators commonly used in LCAM include greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, energy use, and waste generation. GHG emissions, particularly carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), are typically the primary focus, given their direct link to climate change. Energy use is also a critical metric, as it reflects the intensity of resource consumption and provides insights into potential improvements through energy efficiency or renewable energy integration. Waste generation, including hazardous and non-hazardous waste, is an important indicator of resource inefficiency and environmental pollution (Akinluwade, et. al., 2015, Mustapha, et al., 2018).

Other indicators, such as water usage, land use, and toxicity, may also be relevant depending on the industry and product type. For instance, water-intensive industries like textiles or agriculture may prioritize water footprint analysis, while electronics manufacturers may focus on e-waste and the lifecycle of rare earth materials (Olajide, et al., 2021, Onaghinor, Uzozie & Esan, 2021). In all cases, LCAM enables the quantification of these indicators in a standardized format, making it easier to compare alternatives and communicate results to stakeholders. Figure 1 shows green supply chain with linkages between forward and reverse activities together with their corresponding directives presented by Jaggernath & Khan, 2015.



**Figure 1:** Green supply chain with linkages between forward and reverse activities together with their corresponding directives (Jaggernath & Khan, 2015).

Despite the clear benefits of LCAM in green supply chain design, several gaps and challenges persist in current practices. One major limitation is the lack of high-quality, accessible data across the full supply chain. Many companies, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), struggle with data collection at the supplier level, especially when dealing with global, multi-tier supply chains. Without accurate data, LCAM results may be skewed or incomplete, limiting their usefulness for strategic decisions (Akinrinoye, et. al., 2020, Fagbore, et al., 2020).

Another issue is the difficulty of integrating LCAM into real-time supply chain decision-making processes. Traditional LCA studies are often conducted as one-time assessments, with static assumptions and limited applicability to dynamic environments. However, supply chain decisions such as routing, sourcing, and production planning require continuous and rapid evaluation of trade-offs. The lack of tools and platforms that can embed LCAM into digital supply chain systems, such as enterprise resource planning (ERP) or supply chain management (SCM) software, is a significant barrier to its widespread adoption (Onifade, et al., 2022, Owoade, et al., 2022).

There is also a methodological gap in linking environmental performance to economic and operational metrics. Many LCAM studies focus exclusively on environmental indicators without considering cost, service level, or risk implications. As a result, supply chain managers may find it difficult to justify green design choices, especially when they appear to conflict with cost or lead-time objectives. A more integrated approach that balances sustainability with economic viability is needed to support broader acceptance and implementation (Akinrinoye, et ., 2021, Chianumba, et al., 2021).

Additionally, most existing LCAM applications are limited to product-level analysis, with fewer studies addressing network-level design decisions such as facility location, transportation mode selection, and

inventory policies. Green supply chain design requires a systemic perspective, and LCAM methodologies must evolve to support decision-making at multiple levels, from individual components to entire value networks (Akpan, et al., 2017, Isa & Dem, 2014). Finally, there is a lack of standardized frameworks and benchmarks for interpreting LCAM results. Without consistent methodologies or industry-specific performance benchmarks, organizations face challenges in setting meaningful targets or comparing their performance against peers. This hampers transparency and weakens stakeholder confidence in reported sustainability outcomes (Olawale, Isibor & Fiemotongha, 2022, Oluoha, et al., 2022).

In conclusion, while Lifecycle Emissions Assessment Models offer powerful capabilities for informing green supply chain design, several limitations must be addressed to unlock their full potential. Future research and practice should focus on improving data availability, enhancing model integration with digital supply chain systems, linking environmental outcomes with business metrics, and developing scalable, network-level assessment frameworks (Onifade, et al., 2022, Onukwulu, et al., 2022). By addressing these challenges, LCAM can become a cornerstone of sustainable supply chain management, supporting organizations in their transition toward low-carbon, circular, and environmentally responsible value creation.

## 2.2. Methodology

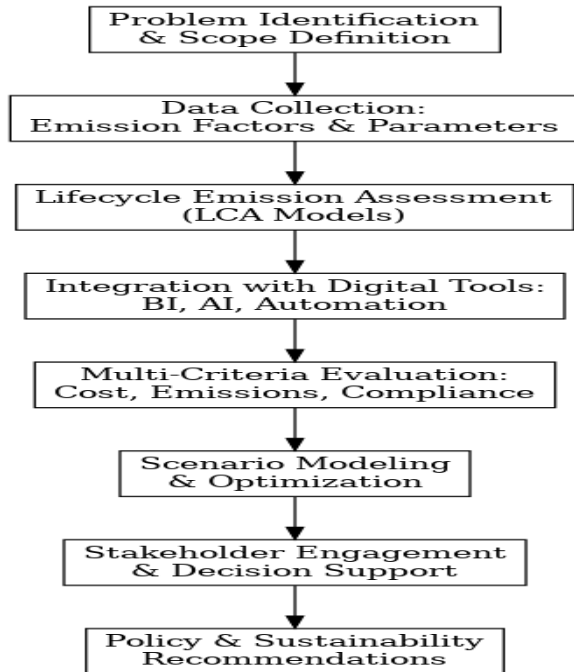
The methodology begins with the identification of the environmental and operational challenges facing modern supply chains, particularly with respect to carbon-intensive processes and regulatory compliance. Lifecycle assessment (LCA) serves as the foundational modeling approach, incorporating cradle-to-grave analysis across procurement, manufacturing, distribution, and end-of-life stages. Based on the framework outlined by Sala et al. (2016), emissions data were systematically gathered from existing supply chain configurations, using primary and secondary sources—this includes transportation emissions, embedded carbon in materials, and process-level energy use.

To enable holistic analysis, a data-driven approach was implemented integrating business intelligence (BI) platforms and AI-assisted decision-support tools, such as those proposed by Abayomi et al. (2021) and Ogbuefi et al. (2022). These digital enablers allowed structured modeling of scenarios, evaluating trade-offs between cost-efficiency and emission reductions. Concurrently, concepts from cloud-native data architectures and predictive modeling (Ojika et al., 2022; Ogunnowo et al., 2021) supported real-time simulation of different supply chain configurations under varying carbon policy constraints.

Furthermore, stakeholder-centric design thinking was embedded, ensuring that inputs from procurement managers, logistics experts, compliance officers, and sustainability advocates were incorporated. This mirrors inclusive frameworks described by Adanigbo et al. (2022) and Adewale et al. (2021), reinforcing equitable and practical decision-making. Emissions estimates were fed into a multi-criteria decision analysis (MCDA) model that considered ecological, economic, and regulatory impact dimensions. Optimization routines were

subsequently employed to determine the lowest-carbon configurations with acceptable operational costs and service levels.

The outcome of this methodology is a lifecycle-aware supply chain design blueprint capable of supporting green transformation in manufacturing and distribution. The validated model informs policy briefs, investment guidelines, and real-time operational dashboards for sustainability-oriented firms.



**Figure 2:** Flowchart of the study methodology

### 2.3. Lifecycle Emissions Modeling

Lifecycle emissions modeling is a foundational component of green supply chain design, offering a structured and empirical approach to quantify the environmental impacts associated with each stage of a product's journey from cradle to grave. In this context, Lifecycle Emissions Assessment Models (LCAM) serve as analytical tools that map emissions across all relevant supply chain stages, enabling organizations to identify carbon hotspots, allocate emissions to specific operations, and implement informed sustainability strategies (Akpan, Awe & Idowu, 2019, Oni, et al., 2018). This comprehensive view supports supply chain managers in redesigning logistics, sourcing, production, and end-of-life management with a goal of minimizing the overall carbon footprint and aligning with sustainability goals.

Mapping emissions across supply chain stages begins by delineating the life cycle of the product under study, typically broken into five main phases: raw material extraction, manufacturing, distribution, use, and end-of-life treatment or disposal. Each of these stages contributes uniquely to the total emissions profile of the supply



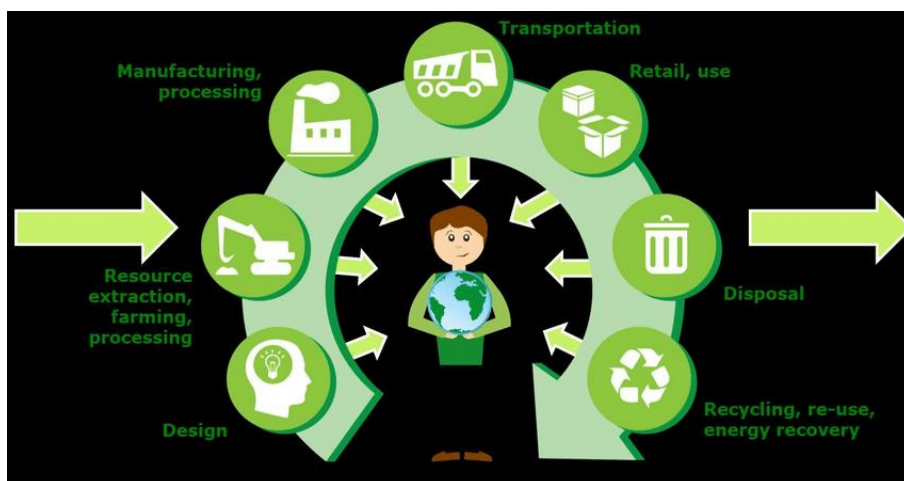
chain. Raw material extraction often involves energy-intensive mining, processing, and refining operations, particularly for metals and petrochemical-based materials (Onaghinor, Uzozie & Esan, 2021). These activities typically produce significant amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gases due to fossil fuel use and industrial processes. Manufacturing, the next phase, contributes through the energy consumption of factories, the emissions intensity of processes such as molding or assembly, and the use of intermediate goods (Olawale, Isibor & Fiemotongha, 2022, Oluwafemi, et al., 2022).

Distribution-related emissions encompass transportation from factories to warehouses, retailers, and consumers. The emissions footprint here depends on mode of transport (e.g., air, sea, rail, or truck), fuel type, distance, and load efficiency. The use phase refers to the emissions produced while the product is in use, which is relevant for energy-consuming goods such as electronics or vehicles (Oluoha, et al., 2022, Onaghinor, Uzozie & Esan, 2022). Finally, the end-of-life stage includes emissions related to recycling, landfill disposal, or incineration. While often overlooked in traditional supply chain analysis, this stage can contribute substantially to total lifecycle emissions, especially if disposal practices are inefficient or if product materials are non-recyclable (Awe, 2017, Oduola, et al., 2014).

Accurately allocating emissions to specific supply chain activities is a critical step in LCAM. This allocation involves determining which operations or nodes in the supply chain are responsible for a proportion of the total emissions, allowing managers to target interventions effectively. For example, in a consumer electronics supply chain, emissions may be broken down by component production (e.g., battery assembly, screen manufacturing), transport (e.g., shipping from Asia to Europe), and packaging. The allocation is often based on physical metrics such as weight, volume, or energy use. In more advanced models, economic allocation (based on cost or value) and temporal allocation (across lifecycle stages) are used to capture indirect and time-dependent impacts (Onaghinor, Uzozie & Esan, 2021).

The use of specialized software tools significantly enhances the accuracy, efficiency, and scalability of lifecycle emissions modeling. SimaPro, GaBi, and OpenLCA are three widely used platforms that support comprehensive lifecycle inventory data management, impact assessment, and results visualization. SimaPro is particularly known for its flexibility in modeling complex product systems and its extensive database integrations (such as Ecoinvent and Agri-footprint). GaBi offers a user-friendly interface and is often preferred for industrial applications due to its library of predefined templates and regional datasets (Mustapha, et al., 2021, Odetunde, Adekunle & Ogeawuchi, 2021). OpenLCA is an open-source tool that provides robust modeling capabilities and allows for customization by integrating various third-party datasets. These tools support LCAM by enabling users to input data for material flows, energy consumption, transport distances, and waste management practices, and then calculating the associated emissions based on standardized impact assessment methods such as IPCC Global Warming Potentials or ReCiPe (Oluoha, et al., 2022, Onibokun, et al., 2022, Uzozie, et al., 2022). Life Cycle Assessment basic principles of accounting resource and emissions along each step of production and consumption supply chains presented by Sala, et al., 2016 is shown in figure 3.





**Figure 3:** Life Cycle Assessment basic principles of accounting resource and emissions along each step of production and consumption supply chains (Sala, et al., 2016).

Modeling assumptions and boundary definitions play a crucial role in determining the accuracy and relevance of LCAM outputs. One of the first decisions in emissions modeling is the choice of system boundaries essentially, defining which processes and stages are included in the assessment. Cradle-to-gate assessments, for instance, focus only on emissions from raw material extraction to product manufacturing, excluding the use and disposal stages (Adedokun, et al., 2022, Ogeawuchi, et al., 2022). Cradle-to-grave, by contrast, includes the entire lifecycle, offering a more comprehensive but also more data-intensive assessment. Boundary definitions must be consistent and transparent to ensure comparability and reproducibility (Awe & Akpan, 2017, Olaoye, et al., 2016). Assumptions regarding electricity grid mixes, transport fuel emissions factors, process efficiency, and product usage behavior must be stated clearly, as they can significantly influence the results.

An example lifecycle emissions model applied to the production of a mid-range smartphone reveals several important insights. Using process-based modeling in SimaPro, emissions were calculated across each lifecycle stage using supplier-specific data and industry averages (Adekunle, et al., 2021, Ogunnowo, et al., 2021). The model showed that the manufacturing stage, particularly the production of integrated circuits and batteries, accounted for the highest share of emissions nearly 60% of the total footprint. This was due to the energy-intensive nature of semiconductor fabrication and lithium-ion battery assembly, both of which rely on high-temperature processes and raw materials like cobalt and lithium, which themselves have high upstream emissions (Ojika, et al., 2020, Ozobu, 2020).

The second largest contributor was logistics, accounting for approximately 20% of emissions, mainly from international shipping and last-mile delivery. Interestingly, the use phase contributed less than 10% of emissions, as smartphones are relatively low-energy devices during operation. However, for energy-intensive products like home appliances or electric vehicles, the use phase may dominate the emissions profile. The end-of-life stage in the smartphone model contributed around 5%, primarily due to the low recycling rates

and the use of incineration in certain regions. The remaining emissions were distributed across minor sources, including packaging and marketing-related activities (Awe, 2021, Bidemi, et al., 2021, Fredson, et al, 2021).

These results identified clear carbon hotspots that could inform green design interventions. For example, by redesigning product components to use recycled or lower-impact materials, emissions from the manufacturing stage could be reduced significantly. Similarly, shifting from air to sea freight or investing in regional warehousing could reduce logistics-related emissions. The model also showed the value of modular design and extended product life, which would lower per-unit emissions over time and improve circularity. Even relatively small changes, such as optimizing packaging size and material, showed measurable impacts on transport emissions (Onaghinor, Uzozie & Esan, 2021).

Lifecycle emissions modeling thus provides not only a snapshot of a supply chain's environmental footprint but also actionable insights that can guide both strategic and operational decisions. It enables organizations to move beyond general sustainability claims and develop targeted, measurable, and verifiable improvements in their supply chain operations. When integrated into procurement policies, product development workflows, and corporate reporting, LCAM becomes a powerful enabler of green supply chain transformation (Chianumba, et al., 2022, Fagbore, et al., 2022).

In summary, lifecycle emissions modeling through LCAM allows organizations to dissect their environmental impacts across the entire supply chain, identify critical emission sources, and allocate responsibility across processes and partners. The use of specialized software tools like SimaPro, GaBi, and OpenLCA facilitates rigorous analysis and supports scenario testing under different assumptions and boundaries (Onaghinor, et al., 2021, Osazee Onaghinor & Uzozie, 2021). The outputs of such models, particularly the identification of carbon hotspots, offer a pathway for companies to prioritize interventions that yield the greatest environmental benefits. However, to maximize its impact, LCAM must be continuously refined with real-time data, standardized across industries, and embedded within the broader strategic and digital infrastructure of modern supply chains. As sustainability becomes a defining feature of competitive advantage, lifecycle emissions modeling will play an increasingly central role in guiding resilient, responsible, and resource-efficient supply chain design. (Adeniji, et al., 2022, Ogunyankinnu, et al., 2022)

## **2.4. Green Supply Chain Design Framework**

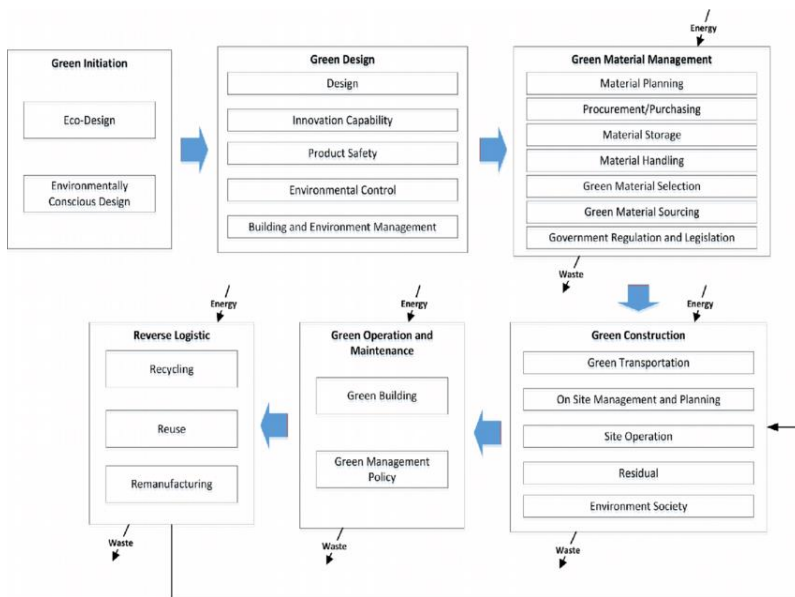
Designing a green supply chain framework using Lifecycle Emissions Assessment Models (LCAM) involves the seamless integration of environmental metrics into core supply chain decision-making processes. Traditional supply chain management typically emphasizes cost, lead time, and service levels, often at the expense of environmental impacts. However, as climate concerns intensify and stakeholders increasingly demand sustainable practices, organizations are compelled to reconfigure their supply chains to reduce emissions while maintaining economic viability (Chianumba, et al., 2022, Ifenatuora, Awoyemi & Atobatele, 2022). The proposed framework embeds LCAM as a central analytical tool, enabling decision-makers to

evaluate environmental consequences alongside operational metrics. By incorporating emissions data at each stage of the supply chain upstream, midstream, and downstream the framework supports a more balanced and sustainable approach to supply chain design (Adesemoye, et al., 2021, Olajide, et al., 2021).

Integrating LCAM into supply chain decision-making requires a foundational shift in how supply chains are modeled and optimized. Rather than treating environmental impact as a secondary consideration or compliance measure, the framework positions lifecycle emissions as a primary decision criterion, equal in weight to cost and feasibility. This integration begins with the collection and analysis of emissions data from suppliers, production sites, logistics partners, and end-of-life processors (Adesemoye, et al., 2021, Ogunnowo, et al., 2021). LCAM provides the necessary structure to organize this data across the full lifecycle of products, allowing emissions to be calculated per unit of output or per dollar of revenue. These emissions values are then used to compare alternative supply chain configurations, informing strategic choices related to sourcing, production location, transportation modes, and product design (Onaghinor, et al., 2021, Onifade, et al., 2021).

To illustrate the framework's application, consider the evaluation of alternative supply chain designs such as localized sourcing, renewable energy integration, and circular logistics. Localized sourcing involves selecting suppliers that are geographically closer to production or consumption centers, thereby reducing transportation emissions and exposure to global disruptions (Onaghinor, et al., 2021). LCAM can be used to model the emissions impact of sourcing components from regional versus overseas suppliers, factoring in differences in transport modes, distances, and local energy mixes. In many cases, while localized sourcing may entail higher unit costs due to labor or regulatory differences, it can deliver significant emissions savings and improve responsiveness, especially in consumer-focused industries (Fagbore, et al., 2022, Fredson, et al., 2022, Osamika, et al., 2022).

The use of renewable energy in production and warehousing is another strategy that can be evaluated within the framework. LCAM enables the comparison of emissions between facilities powered by fossil fuels versus those utilizing solar, wind, or hydroelectric energy. The model accounts for the energy intensity of different production processes and calculates the resulting emissions under various power sources (Adesemoye, et al., 2022, Ogeawuchi, et al., 2022). This allows companies to quantify the environmental benefits of renewable energy adoption and weigh them against implementation costs and local availability. In regions where grid electricity is carbon-intensive, transitioning to onsite or procured renewable energy can lead to substantial emissions reductions without altering product design or sourcing patterns (Fredson, et al, 2021, Ifenatuora, Awoyemi & Atobatele, 2021). Wibowo, Handayani & Mustikasari, 2018 presented the framework of green supply chain processes for implementation in the construction industry shown in figure 4.



**Figure 4:** Framework of green supply chain processes for implementation in the construction industry (Wibowo, Handayani & Mustikasari, 2018).

Circular logistics, which involves designing supply chains to recover, reuse, and recycle materials, is a key pillar of green supply chain design. Through LCAM, companies can model the emissions implications of reverse logistics networks that collect end-of-life products, remanufacture components, and reintegrate materials into the production cycle (Adesemoye, et al., 2022, Ogbuefi, et al., 2022). For example, a company producing electronic goods may assess the emissions difference between manufacturing new batteries from raw lithium versus remanufacturing from recovered cells. While reverse logistics may require additional infrastructure and coordination, the lifecycle emissions benefits often outweigh the initial investment (Fredson, et al, 2022, Ifenatuora, Awoyemi & Atobatele, 2022). Furthermore, circular strategies contribute to resource conservation and can generate long-term cost savings by reducing dependence on virgin materials.

The selection of green supply chain design alternatives within the framework is guided by three core criteria: emissions reduction, economic cost, and implementation feasibility. Emissions data, derived from LCAM, provides the environmental benchmark for comparison. Cost analysis includes not only direct financial expenses but also long-term savings from energy efficiency, material reuse, and reputational gains. (Onaghinor, Uzozie & Esan, 2021) Feasibility encompasses operational readiness, technological maturity, supplier availability, and regulatory compatibility. By evaluating alternatives across these three criteria, the framework ensures that selected strategies are not only environmentally beneficial but also practically implementable and economically sustainable.

In the upstream segment of the supply chain, strategies for emissions reduction focus on material sourcing and supplier engagement. This includes selecting low-emission materials, partnering with suppliers that use renewable energy, and developing sustainability criteria for procurement contracts. LCAM supports these

strategies by modeling the cradle-to-gate emissions of different materials and suppliers, enabling organizations to build emissions considerations into supplier scorecards and risk assessments. Additionally, supplier collaboration programs can be established to promote best practices in emissions reporting and reduction, such as joint investments in cleaner production technologies (Ifenatuora, Awoyemi & Atobatele, 2021, Kufile, et al., 2021).

In the midstream stage, which includes manufacturing and assembly, the framework emphasizes energy efficiency, process optimization, and facility design. LCAM can identify energy-intensive operations and suggest opportunities for optimization, such as improving heating and cooling systems, upgrading machinery, or reconfiguring production flows to reduce waste. Green building certifications and smart factory technologies are also relevant at this stage, as they contribute to lower operational emissions. Moreover, the adoption of modular product designs that simplify disassembly and recycling enhances midstream circularity, aligning with the broader goals of green supply chain design (Ifenatuora, Awoyemi & Atobatele, 2022, Ikhalea, et al., 2022).

Downstream processes, covering product distribution, use, and end-of-life management, also offer significant emissions reduction potential. Transportation emissions can be reduced by shifting from air to sea or rail freight, optimizing delivery routes, and adopting electric or low-emission vehicles. LCAM provides emissions profiles for various transport options, allowing companies to simulate the impact of alternative logistics configurations (Omisola, et al., 2020, Oni, et al., 2018). The product use phase, especially for energy-consuming goods, can be addressed by designing for energy efficiency and educating customers on sustainable usage. For example, a home appliance manufacturer may compare emissions across models with different energy ratings, using LCAM data to support eco-design decisions (Adeshina, 2021, Ogeawuchi, et al., 2022).

End-of-life strategies include recycling, composting, and safe disposal, with LCAM enabling organizations to assess the emissions associated with different waste treatment options. For instance, the model can quantify the benefits of investing in take-back programs or partnering with certified recyclers, as opposed to allowing products to enter landfill or informal recycling streams. These decisions not only influence the environmental footprint but also affect compliance with extended producer responsibility (EPR) regulations and circular economy targets (Okolo, et al., 2022, Olajide, et al., 2022).

Overall, the green supply chain design framework using LCAM provides a structured and quantifiable method for embedding sustainability into supply chain decisions. By integrating emissions data with operational and financial metrics, it enables organizations to make trade-offs transparently and align supply chain strategies with corporate environmental goals. The framework encourages cross-functional collaboration between procurement, operations, logistics, and sustainability teams, ensuring that decisions are informed by both environmental science and business realities (Omisola, et al., 2020, Oyedokun, 2019).

As supply chains face growing scrutiny from regulators, investors, and consumers, the ability to measure and manage emissions at every level becomes a competitive necessity. Lifecycle Emissions Assessment Models

empower organizations to understand their environmental impact holistically, identify the most effective interventions, and design resilient, responsible, and resource-efficient supply networks (Ojonugwa, Adanigbo & Ogunwale, 2022, Okolo, et al., 2022). In doing so, they not only contribute to climate mitigation but also build long-term value through operational efficiency, risk reduction, and stakeholder trust. This integrated approach to green supply chain design represents a vital step toward achieving net-zero ambitions and fostering a more sustainable global economy (Ogunnowo, et al., 2020, Oladuji, et al., 2020).

## 2.5. Case Study Analysis

The practical application of green supply chain design using Lifecycle Emissions Assessment Models (LCAM) is best illustrated through case study analysis. Real-world implementation helps validate theoretical frameworks and demonstrates how environmental metrics can be embedded into supply chain decisions. This case study focuses on two distinct sectors consumer electronics and packaged food production both of which represent high-volume industries with significant environmental footprints. These sectors were selected for their contrasting supply chain characteristics and the potential to uncover sector-specific and cross-sectoral sustainability strategies (Ifenatuora, Awoyemi & Atobatele, 2022, Odetunde, Adekunle & Ogeawuchi, 2022). Each case explores how LCAM was applied to assess and optimize supply chain configurations, leading to data-driven environmental improvements without sacrificing operational efficiency.

In the consumer electronics sector, the case involved a mid-sized company producing smartphones and tablets with a global footprint. The supply chain extended from component manufacturers in East Asia to assembly facilities in Southeast Asia, followed by distribution centers in North America and Europe (Adanigbo, et al., 2022, Ojika, et al., 2022). The company aimed to reduce its carbon footprint while maintaining profitability and market responsiveness. Three supply chain scenarios were developed for evaluation using LCAM: the existing global model with centralized production and long-distance shipping; a hybrid model with regional assembly centers closer to key markets; and a decentralized model featuring local sourcing, renewable energy-powered factories, and reverse logistics for end-of-life devices (Adewoyin, 2021, Ogeawuchi, et al., 2021).

In the packaged food sector, the case study centered on a national brand manufacturing dairy products in the United States. The supply chain included raw milk sourcing from farms, cold-chain logistics, and nationwide distribution to retail outlets. Sustainability goals included reducing Scope 3 emissions, improving energy use in processing, and cutting packaging waste. Here, the evaluated scenarios included maintaining the current supply chain with slight efficiency upgrades, transitioning to plant-based packaging and rail transport, and localizing milk collection to reduce transportation distances while installing solar power systems at processing plants (Adewoyin, 2021, Ogbuefi, et al., 2021).

The LCAM approach was applied consistently across both sectors, using process-based modeling with support from SimaPro and GaBi software tools. The first step involved mapping the complete supply chain for each



scenario and gathering data on energy consumption, transportation distances, material inputs, and waste generation. Emission factors were obtained from databases such as Ecoinvent and U.S. EPA emissions profiles, ensuring reliability and comparability. The models were built to reflect cradle-to-grave boundaries, capturing emissions from raw material sourcing to end-of-life disposal (Adanigbo, et al., 2022, Ogunwole, et al., 2022).

For the consumer electronics case, the LCAM revealed that the manufacturing stage contributed over 60% of total lifecycle emissions, mainly due to the energy-intensive production of lithium batteries and integrated circuits. Distribution accounted for approximately 20% of emissions, while end-of-life disposal contributed 10%. The remaining emissions were linked to packaging and minor assembly activities. In the baseline (centralized) model, the concentration of production in high-emission energy grids and reliance on air freight were the dominant factors driving emissions. The hybrid model, which added regional assembly facilities in Europe and North America, reduced emissions by 18%, primarily by lowering transport distances and using cleaner regional grids (Ifenatuora, Awoyemi & Atobatele, 2022, Isa, 2022, Oyeyemi, 2022). The decentralized model offered the best performance, with a 32% reduction in total emissions. This model benefited from local sourcing of less emissions-intensive components, use of solar-powered factories, and inclusion of a reverse logistics program that enabled recovery and recycling of key components like batteries and screens (Adewoyin, 2022, Ogbuefi, et al., 2022, Ojika, et al., 2022).

In the packaged food case, the baseline model showed that cold-chain logistics were responsible for nearly 40% of emissions, followed by energy consumption in processing (30%) and packaging waste (20%). The improved baseline scenario with minor upgrades achieved only a 6% reduction in emissions. However, the alternative configuration with rail-based logistics and plant-based packaging achieved a 22% reduction (Isa, 2022, Mustapha, et al., 2022, Olorunyomi, Adewale & Odonkor, 2022). The most substantial gains came from the third scenario, where local sourcing of raw milk within a 150-mile radius and installation of solar panels at processing plants reduced total emissions by 35%. This configuration also improved supply reliability during adverse weather events and reduced energy costs in the long run (Adewoyin, et al., 2020, Ogbuefi, et al., 2020).

Comparing the results from both sectors highlighted the importance of context-specific design. In electronics, emissions were concentrated in upstream manufacturing and distribution, making decentralization and renewable energy critical levers for sustainability. In food production, emissions were more evenly distributed, and transportation modes and energy use in processing emerged as dominant factors. LCAM enabled stakeholders to identify carbon hotspots and test design alternatives before committing to capital investments, thus de-risking sustainability initiatives (Adanigbo, et al., 2022, Ogunsola, et al., 2022, Uzozie, Onaghinor & Esan, 2022).

Key insights emerged from the case study analyses. First, emissions reduction is most effective when interventions target high-impact stages of the lifecycle. LCAM enables this by providing a clear picture of where emissions are concentrated. Second, integrating renewable energy sources into supply chain operations yields significant benefits in both sectors, particularly when paired with operational redesign (Odetunde,

Adekunle & Ogeawuchi, 2021). Third, the trade-offs between emissions and cost are not always direct or unfavorable. In both cases, the most sustainable configurations also delivered cost savings in the long term through energy efficiency, material recovery, and logistics optimization.

Another important insight was the role of digital tools and data quality in enabling LCAM. Accurate emissions modeling depends on detailed, up-to-date data from multiple tiers of the supply chain. Both case studies encountered challenges in collecting Scope 3 emissions data, particularly in upstream sourcing. Overcoming these challenges required supplier collaboration and the use of digital platforms to track and share environmental data. Companies that invested in data infrastructure were better positioned to scale their LCAM applications and link them with broader environmental, social, and governance (ESG) reporting (Adanigbo, et al., 2022, Ogunnowo, et al., 2022).

The sustainability implications of these findings are significant. First, organizations adopting LCAM can more effectively meet regulatory and market expectations related to climate disclosure and carbon neutrality. Second, emissions-based design decisions create opportunities for innovation in packaging, materials science, and supply chain engineering. Third, LCAM enables organizations to establish measurable sustainability targets and benchmark progress over time. For instance, both companies in the study were able to set science-based targets for emissions reduction, supported by data from the LCAM (Odetunde, Adekunle & Ogeawuchi, 2022, Okolo, et al., 2022). Furthermore, the adoption of green supply chain design using LCAM has ripple effects across stakeholder networks. Suppliers are incentivized to reduce their own emissions to remain part of preferred procurement networks. Logistics partners are encouraged to invest in cleaner fleets and optimized routing. Consumers, increasingly aware of product carbon footprints, respond positively to brands that demonstrate transparency and environmental responsibility (Adewoyin, et al., 2020, Odofin, et al., 2020).

In conclusion, the case study analysis confirms that green supply chain design using Lifecycle Emissions Assessment Models is not only feasible but highly effective in supporting sustainability objectives across diverse sectors. By enabling emissions to be quantified, visualized, and compared across alternative configurations, LCAM empowers organizations to make informed decisions that align operational performance with environmental stewardship (Adanigbo, et al., 2022, Ogeawuchi, et al., 2022). These insights have practical implications for supply chain managers, product designers, sustainability officers, and policymakers working toward climate-resilient and low-carbon economies. As more organizations adopt LCAM frameworks and digital infrastructure to support them, the transition to greener, more responsible supply chains will accelerate, contributing to global efforts to mitigate climate change and promote sustainable development.

## 2.6. Discussion

The integration of Lifecycle Emissions Assessment Models (LCAM) into green supply chain design introduces a transformative opportunity for organizations aiming to reconcile environmental responsibility with

operational demands. However, the adoption and practical use of LCAM also expose a range of strategic trade-offs, technological challenges, and policy implications that must be thoroughly examined to understand its broader potential and limitations (Adewoyin, et al., 2021, Odojin, et al., 2021). The discussion surrounding LCAM in green supply chain design highlights how organizations must navigate the balance between environmental performance and traditional supply chain metrics like cost, lead time, and efficiency.

One of the most prominent trade-offs in green supply chain design lies in balancing emissions reduction with operational efficiency. Supply chains have traditionally been engineered for cost minimization and speed favoring centralized production, lean inventory practices, and global sourcing strategies. These configurations, while efficient under stable conditions, are often carbon-intensive due to long-distance transport, energy-intensive processes, and minimal redundancy (Abiola-Adams, et al., 2022, Ogunyankinnu, et al., 2022). In contrast, supply chain configurations designed to reduce emissions such as localized sourcing, renewable energy adoption, or circular logistics can sometimes increase costs or disrupt existing efficiencies. For example, switching to regional suppliers to cut transport-related emissions may raise unit costs due to higher labor or regulatory compliance expenses. Similarly, investing in renewable energy infrastructure or reverse logistics systems requires upfront capital that may not immediately align with short-term financial targets.

Despite these trade-offs, many organizations have begun to view sustainability and efficiency not as mutually exclusive, but as complementary goals over the long term. Lifecycle emissions data often reveal hidden inefficiencies, such as excessive packaging, redundant transport steps, or energy waste in production, which can be addressed to reduce both emissions and operating costs. Moreover, as energy costs rise and carbon pricing mechanisms become more prevalent, emissions-intensive practices are likely to become more expensive, shifting the cost-benefit analysis in favor of green designs (Adewuyi, et al., 2022, Ogbuefi, et al., 2022). LCAM provides the analytical foundation to evaluate these trade-offs systematically, allowing organizations to identify configurations that offer environmental benefits without compromising service levels or financial performance.

Technology and digital tools play an essential role in enabling the integration of LCAM into supply chain management. The increasing digitization of supply chains provides access to real-time data on material flows, energy consumption, transport distances, and supplier practices. Digital tools such as enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems, Internet of Things (IoT) sensors, and cloud-based analytics platforms create the infrastructure needed to collect, process, and analyze this data in a structured format. Specialized LCAM software tools like SimaPro, GaBi, and OpenLCA extend these capabilities by providing pre-built emissions databases, modeling templates, and impact assessment methods aligned with international standards. These tools allow organizations to simulate various supply chain scenarios and assess the environmental consequences of decisions before they are implemented.

The integration of LCAM with digital supply chain systems also enables dynamic emissions monitoring and continuous improvement. For example, emissions dashboards embedded within supply chain control towers

can provide decision-makers with real-time visibility into carbon hotspots across the network. AI-powered analytics can forecast emissions impacts of sourcing changes, transport disruptions, or product design modifications (Abiola-Adams, et al., 2022, Ogeawuchi, et al., 2022). Digital twins virtual replicas of supply chains can be used to run emissions simulations under different operating conditions, supporting scenario planning and resilience testing. These advancements not only improve the accuracy of emissions modeling but also make LCAM more accessible and actionable for supply chain managers and executives.

Despite its potential, the widespread adoption of LCAM in green supply chain design is hindered by several challenges, chief among them being data availability. Lifecycle emissions modeling depends on accurate, granular data about materials, energy use, transport distances, and production processes. For many organizations, especially those with multi-tier global supply chains, this data is difficult to obtain. Suppliers may lack the capacity or willingness to share emissions data, particularly in regions with low regulatory pressure or limited digital infrastructure. In such cases, companies may be forced to rely on industry averages or outdated datasets, reducing the precision and credibility of their models (Abiola-Adams, et al., 2021, Oladuji, et al., 2021).

Cost is another barrier to implementation. Developing an LCAM framework requires investments in software, training, data collection, and modeling expertise. Smaller organizations or those in cost-sensitive industries may struggle to justify these investments, especially if emissions reductions do not translate into immediate financial returns. Even where long-term savings are possible, the initial cost and time required to build an accurate lifecycle model can discourage adoption (Ojonugwa, Adanigbo & Ogunwale, 2022, Olajide, et al., 2022). Additionally, integrating LCAM into decision-making processes requires changes in organizational culture, workflows, and incentive structures factors that contribute to the overall complexity of implementation.

Moreover, the absence of standardized methodologies and benchmarks can complicate the use of LCAM across industries. Different software tools may use varying impact assessment methods, and emissions factors may differ by region or data source. Without consistent standards, it becomes challenging to compare emissions across suppliers or assess progress against industry peers. This lack of uniformity also creates skepticism among stakeholders, including customers and regulators, who may question the credibility of reported emissions reductions. Establishing common standards, perhaps under the guidance of international bodies or industry consortia, is essential to building trust and accelerating adoption (Agboola, et al., 2022, Odio, et al., 2022, Ojika, et al., 2022).

The policy and managerial implications of integrating LCAM into green supply chain design are far-reaching. For policymakers, promoting LCAM adoption supports national and international climate goals by enabling more transparent and data-driven emissions reporting. Governments can play a role by incentivizing LCAM through tax credits, grants, or public procurement requirements (Abayomi, et al., 2021, Okolo, et al., 2021). Mandating emissions disclosure at the product or supply chain level, similar to energy efficiency labels in appliances or emissions declarations in vehicles, would also encourage companies to adopt lifecycle modeling

practices. Regulatory alignment especially across trade partners can help create a level playing field and reduce compliance burdens for multinational companies.

For managers, the use of LCAM requires a strategic rethinking of how supply chain performance is defined and measured. Traditional key performance indicators (KPIs) such as cost-per-unit, on-time delivery, and inventory turnover must be supplemented with environmental metrics such as emissions per unit, lifecycle carbon intensity, and circularity rates (Abayomi, et al., 2022, Ogunnowo, et al., 2022, Uzozie, Onaghinor & Esan, 2022). This shift necessitates collaboration between sustainability teams, supply chain planners, procurement officers, and technology providers to ensure that environmental considerations are embedded into everyday decisions. LCAM also supports stakeholder engagement by providing credible data for ESG reporting, investor disclosures, and consumer communication. As sustainability becomes a core brand attribute, the ability to quantify and share emissions performance across the supply chain becomes a competitive advantage (Agboola, et al., 2022, Odio, et al., 2022, Ojika, et al., 2022).

In sum, the integration of LCAM into green supply chain design represents a pivotal step toward aligning economic activity with environmental stewardship. While trade-offs between emissions reduction and efficiency remain, the growing availability of digital tools and shifting regulatory and market pressures are making sustainable supply chains both feasible and desirable. Addressing the challenges of data access, cost, and standardization will be critical to scaling this approach (Abayomi, et al., 2022, Ogeawuchi, et al., 2022). At the same time, organizations that embrace LCAM and integrate it into strategic decision-making will be better equipped to navigate the transition to a low-carbon economy, manage risk, and deliver long-term value to stakeholders. As climate concerns become central to business strategy, lifecycle emissions modeling will move from a niche sustainability practice to a mainstream pillar of supply chain excellence.

## 2.7. Conclusion

The exploration of green supply chain design using Lifecycle Emissions Assessment Models (LCAM) has demonstrated the vital role that emissions-focused analytics play in driving sustainability across the full spectrum of supply chain activities. This study has shown that by integrating LCAM into supply chain planning and decision-making, organizations can systematically evaluate the environmental impacts of various configurations ranging from raw material sourcing and manufacturing to transportation, usage, and end-of-life management. Through detailed modeling and case study analysis, the findings underscore the ability of LCAM to identify carbon hotspots, quantify trade-offs between operational efficiency and environmental performance, and support the implementation of alternative strategies such as localized sourcing, renewable energy use, and circular logistics.

A key contribution of this research is the development and validation of a framework that positions LCAM not merely as a compliance or reporting tool, but as a strategic asset for green supply chain design. The framework empowers decision-makers to use emissions data alongside traditional performance metrics like

cost and feasibility to make informed, future-oriented choices. By applying LCAM across sectors such as consumer electronics and food production, the study has illustrated how emissions data can lead to more resilient, efficient, and environmentally sound supply chains. The incorporation of software tools and digital platforms further enhances the scalability and responsiveness of LCAM, enabling real-time monitoring, predictive analysis, and adaptive planning.

LCAM is poised to play an increasingly central role in future green supply chain initiatives. As businesses face mounting pressure from governments, investors, and consumers to reduce their environmental footprint, the ability to measure and manage lifecycle emissions becomes a cornerstone of sustainable operations. LCAM supports this transformation by offering a structured, data-driven method to evaluate environmental performance at every stage of the supply chain. Its integration with digital technologies enables greater transparency, traceability, and cross-functional collaboration. In a global context of rising energy costs, carbon pricing, and environmental regulation, LCAM offers not only a sustainability advantage but also a competitive one.

Despite its promise, the study also acknowledges certain limitations. Access to high-quality, granular data remains a significant challenge, especially for companies operating complex, multi-tier supply chains. The reliance on industry averages and assumptions in emissions modeling can reduce the precision and relevance of results. Furthermore, the lack of standardized methodologies and benchmarks across LCAM tools and databases may limit the comparability of findings across different sectors or organizations. Implementation costs and cultural barriers within organizations can also pose obstacles to the widespread adoption of LCAM-based decision-making.

Future research should aim to address these limitations by exploring advanced data integration techniques, such as blockchain and IoT, to improve the accuracy and availability of emissions data across the supply chain. Developing standardized industry benchmarks and collaborative databases could enhance comparability and support broader adoption. Additionally, expanding the scope of LCAM to include social and biodiversity impacts, as well as economic resilience metrics, would offer a more holistic view of sustainability. Research into the behavioral and organizational dynamics of implementing LCAM in different business contexts could also yield valuable insights for practitioners.

In conclusion, green supply chain design using LCAM offers a powerful pathway to achieving environmental sustainability without compromising operational effectiveness. By embedding emissions analysis into core decision-making processes, organizations can transition from reactive environmental management to proactive, strategic sustainability. As the global economy shifts toward greener practices, the integration of LCAM will become indispensable to building supply chains that are not only efficient and profitable but also responsible and future-ready.



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