



PV Sotecnisol



Operations Manager Ricardo Mendes and Sales Engineer Paulo Rolo are two of a 170 strong international workforce for the multi-faceted company, Sotecnisol. Established in 2006 Sotecnisol's solar panel installation service is currently functioning solely within Portugal, with a view to expand into international markets in the upcoming future. Their client profile is based on domestic, industry and service building, developing a specialty in roof installations.

They first found out about LCA to go when approached by the Ecodesign Centre offering a training session in lifecycle thinking and how to use LCA to go: PV. Paulo and Ricardo were interested in seeing how LCA to go could prove commercially beneficial to Sotecnisol and add value to their customers. Their customers, made up of construction and industry clients, had not enquired about the environmental benefits of PV before, but they felt that this was an area that should be further considered.

During training, Ricardo and Paulo assessed a 300kwph system which Sotecnisol had installed on the roof of a paper making factory in 2012. They were both impressed by the tools feature to graphically demonstrate the CO₂ consumption of solar in comparison to other forms of energy. They also appreciated that they could compare their products by entering each of their specifications, and view, which had performed best. Their chosen installation had an energy payback time of 1.3 years, which they



thought a useful number to communicate to their clients. They found the results clear and especially liked the graphical presentation of the results.

Ricardo and Paulo both believed that environmental benefits were less of a priority for their customers, and as environmental costs had not previously been questioned, it would therefore be Sotecnisol's responsibility to incentivize their clients with this information. In procurement, both believe it is up to the manufacturer and distributor to demonstrate good practice in their work, though both Ricardo and Paulo now feel better prepared and more sensitive to LCA and environmental aspects.

Ricardo said: "We need this to go back in the chain, we have public tenders from companies and government buildings. All offers are ranked 100% by the price. It needs to go back through the supply chain. Maybe 30% go for module efficiency, 70% price. If companies were aware of environmental benefits then maybe they should consider 60% price, 20% environment, 20% technical."