

Afera Flagship Sustainability Project — Quarterly Update Report

Executive Summary

The second quarter of 2026 showed continued momentum across Afera’s sustainability workstreams, with updates spanning **Calculation Methods (WS1)**, **Waste Management (WS2)** and **Communications** initiatives.

WS1 discussed the potential integration of Environmental Product Declarations (EPD) framework into TACK and the roadmap for the official launch of TACK v2.0 including the scope of the planned maintenance update.

WS2 focused on the ongoing work on CEN Design for Recycling (DfR) guidelines, the regulatory ambiguity around release liners, and the technical constraints surrounding composite tape waste recycling, underscoring the need for industry data, alignment, and recovery strategies.

Communications expanded sustainability-related content and resources, supported advocacy efforts, and continued the revamp of key website sections to support the needs of Afera members.

WS1	WS2	Communications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sphera presented the EPD framework and potential integration into TACK A follow-up debrief session on EPDs is planned for the week of 22 June 2026 Scope of the TACK maintenance update discussed Launch of TACK v2.0 planned for early summer, with communication campaign beginning September 2026 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPWR: Ongoing ambiguity on whether release liners are packaging, with direct implications for EPR, recovery, and recycling strategies. CEN DfR Guidelines: Key distinction between <i>repulpable</i> and <i>non-repulpable / wet-strength</i> papers, plus growing focus on macrostickies and adhesive behaviour. Composite tape waste: New recycler introduced, but technical constraints persist and scalable recycling routes remain unproven. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication of Afera’s new PPWR decision tree clarifies adhesive-film status TACK webpage revamp: Updated FAQ section and TACK user logos TACK v2.0 launch preparations: Development of webinar and communication materials

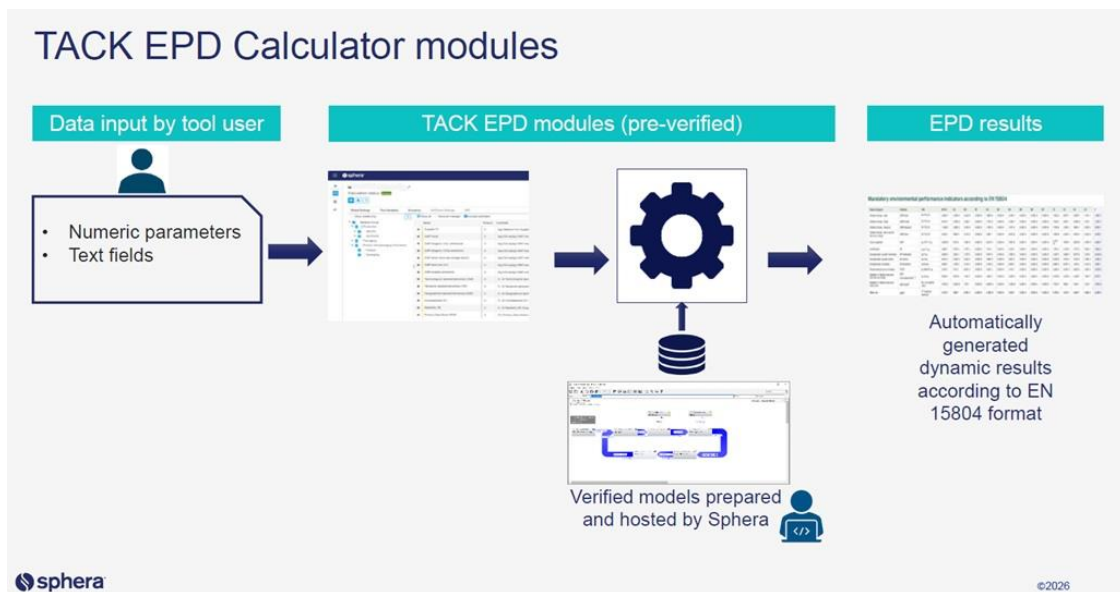
WS1 — Calculation methods

Work under WS1 progressed on two fronts: exploring potential integration of EPD framework into TACK and finalising the roadmap for the official launch of TACK v2.0.

Margarida Gama from Sphera joined the workstream meeting and presented the **EPD framework and TACK EPD Calculator modules**. The framework, based on **ISO 14025** and **EN 15804+A2**, requires cradle-to-gate data as well as additional lifecycle stages. Market demand for EPDs is increasing in **construction**, with growing relevance in **electronics and automotive**. Converters are requesting more harmonised and detailed datasets. The broader scope of EPDs, high data requirements and the absence of dedicated Product Category Rules (PCRs) for tapes remain significant challenges.

A potential extension of TACK was discussed, including **functionalities to facilitate the preparation of EPDs for adhesives and adhesive tapes**, with outputs in the form of pre-verified tables aligned with EN 15804. The conclusion was that TACK should *support* EPD generation rather than supply them, and that a phased approach is required. A follow-up debrief session was held on 23 June 2026.

The full presentation is exclusively available to members and can be viewed [here](#).



A **maintenance update on TACK** covered several scope enhancements. These included:

- Updated LCA database mappings,
- New generic recipes for adhesives, primers and impregnants,
- Integration of recycled content (mechanical and chemical recycling for PP and PE and mechanical recycling for PET),
- Incorporation of bleached and unbleached papers,
- TfS compliance checks, mass balance verification, and improvements to the report and user manual.



The timeline for the **launch of TACK v2.0** was reviewed. Development was completed in May 2026, and verification is ongoing with feedback from the verifier under review. WS participants discussed launch timing and expressed a preference for **an early summer release** followed by a **formal communication campaign in September**.

Lastly, converter-specific needs and rising customer requests for EPDs were highlighted, along with the need to revisit **alignment with other associations** such as **FINAT**.



WS2 — Waste management

The primary discussion topics this quarter were: the CEN DfR guidelines for paper packaging, classification and recycling of release liners, and recycling of tape waste.

A **new CEN DfR standard for plastic packaging (EN 18120)** was published this quarter, introducing multiple parts that set out design rules and test methods. Members noted that the standard is not easily accessible, and it was agreed that Afera will prepare a summary of the relevant sections for the workstream.

On **packaging tapes**, the WS participants noted that:

- **PVC tapes** and **reinforced repulpable paper tapes** are expected to fall in the “red” (not compatible with recycling) category due to higher costs to process chlorinated waste in paper mills and operational issues with the reinforcing fibres in paper mills, respectively. On the other hand, **non-reinforced repulpable paper tapes**, **wet-strength reinforced tapes** and **plastic tapes** are considered in the “green” column (fully compatible with recycling) as they are not viewed as problematic during repulping.

A key clarification was the distinction between repulpable and non-repulpable/wet-strength paper, which will be critical for classification outcomes.

- **Adhesives were another major focus**, with attention on their behaviour during recycling.



- Water-dispersible adhesives (e.g., PVOH) dissolve and integrate into recycled paper, making them non-problematic when present in small amounts;
- Hydrophobic adhesives (e.g., acrylic or rubber PSAs) are more complex, with **classification tied to macrostickies** generation.

A **new CEN test method** is being developed to measure stickies below ~2 mm, applying thresholds and weighting factors. Without sufficient test data, adhesives may default to a “yellow” classification. Afera plans to coordinate with adhesive suppliers and tape manufacturers to generate evidence.

The **classification of release liners** remains legally ambiguous. Regulatory interpretation suggests that use in manufacturing may be considered analogous to that of “process films”, i.e. not packaging, while consumer/professional use could be classified as packaging, triggering extended producer responsibility (EPR) obligations.

- If classified as packaging, industry faces fees and recycling targets;
- If not, there is no clear ownership of waste management.

This uncertainty underscores the need for an **Afera position paper and clear industry alignment**.

Open question to be discussed in future meetings: *if release liners are classified as not packaging, what mechanisms can industry develop to ensure recovery in the absence of regulation?*

Composite tape waste recycling also remains unresolved. Currently, no scalable recycling route has been identified for adhesive-based composites. A new recycler, **RM Group (Belgium)**, was introduced, claiming capability across multiple material streams. Follow-up will be needed to validate whether adhesive composites can be treated effectively and whether new technologies can address this gap.

Communications

This quarter, Communications continued to spotlight Afera’s sustainability and regulatory work. Afera welcomed the PPWR clarification confirming that **adhesive process films** used during manufacturing and remaining on finished or semi-finished products are **not considered packaging under Article 3(1)**.

Working closely with Member Companies including **Novacel, POLIFILM** and **Nitto EMEA**, Afera helped align **industry stakeholders** with the **European Commission**. Following this outcome, we published the [new PPWR decision tree](#) to support members in assessing adhesive-film status.

Communications efforts also focused on expanding the visibility and accessibility of **TACK – The PCF Calculation Tool**. Updates included an [expanded FAQ section, the addition of TACK user logos](#) on the website, and coordinated messaging with member companies to support broader understanding and adoption across the supply chain.

Preparations for the **launch of TACK v2.0** are progressing, with the formal communication campaign set to begin in September 2026. That same month, Karla Pastor, Afera’s Sustainability Project



Manager, and Sreeparna Das, Sustainability Communications Consultant, will showcase the strategic and operational value the AFSP delivers to members at the [2nd European Tape Week](#).

To **strengthen member engagement**, the members-only section has been expanded to include survey data and industry insights, while the monthly newsletters continue to deliver key updates and exclusive resources.

Priorities for the next quarter

In the coming months, TACK 2.0 will be released enabling easier, more complete and reliable PCF calculations. In parallel, we will discuss how we can reuse the significant effort spent on TACK to include other environmental calculations, such as EPDs for construction products.

The PPWR will start to apply this summer despite some uncertainty around definitions and implementation details. Afera remains committed to enable the recycling of release liners and tape waste, and we will continue to address this with our members and other stakeholders.

We hope you can join us in the next meetings, so that we can further increase the collaboration to further advance the adhesive tape and film sector. Contact us at afsp@afera.com for more information.

Upcoming WS meetings

WS1: Calculation methods - Online	WS2: Waste Management - Online
3 September 2026, 10:00-12:00 (CET)	10 September 2026, 10:00-12:00 (CET)
19 November 2026, 10:00-12:00 (CET)	12 November 2026, 10:00-12:00 (CET)