



PRESS RELEASE FROM GLCC

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GLCC Conducts SWOT Analysis of Global Leather Industry

The Global Leather Coordinating Committee (GLCC) met during the recent APLF trade fair in Hong Kong to continue discussions on collaborative projects in the leather industry. To ensure continued alignment of the group with critical strategic needs a brainstorming session was held to identify perceived major Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of importance to the industry. The key Strength identified was the “*natural / renewable*” nature of leather, counterbalanced with a significant Weakness being a “*lack of understanding by general population / consumers*” about leather and the leather industry. A major opportunity for the industry is communication on the “*natural / beauty*” aspects of leather and a major threat being confusion with “*synthetic / artificial*” replacement materials. Participants felt there is a need for better communication about the type of material that we produce and the industry needs to emphasize the sustainability of leather to our customers and consumers.

Good progress is being made on projects initiated by the GLCC. The ICT has compiled a database of leather labelling standards and regulations by country; this will soon be made publicly available. Leather identification by the International Leather Mark is a more complex endeavour, but work on compiling a list of existing marks and ownership is progressing.

Proposals are now in place to generate, from individual tanneries, Leather Carbon Footprint inventory data according to the system boundaries recommended by the 2012 UNIDO Technical Report and endorsed last year in Bologna by GLCC. Some tanneries have already committed to this project. Additional volunteer tanning facilities are welcome, and GLCC will approach relevant candidates worldwide. In addition, Cotance reported that the development work for an EN standard setting Product Category Rules for the environmental footprinting of leather started in March.

A draft list of Critical Substances in leather is being compiled by the IULTCS. The GLCC also discussed the limit of 3 ppm for Chromium VI in leather, which is being adopted under REACH legislation. This limit is expected to be in place in the EU over the next two years; it will also apply to leather entering the EU. The GLCC will support the issuance of best practice guidelines to help meet this restriction.

The next meeting of the GLCC is scheduled for October in Bologna.

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NOTE: The GLCC consists of delegates representing the three International organizations that operate within the leather sector – International Council of Tanners (ICT), International Council of Hide Skin & Leather Traders Associations (ICHSLTA), and International Union of Leather Technologists and Chemists Societies (IULTCS) – and invited guests from key organizations with leather industry interests.