

WORLD LEATHER

THE WORLD'S NO.1 MAGAZINE FOR THE LEATHER INDUSTRY

April/May 2021 | [Published 30th April]

Volume 34, Number 2



Sustainability and expensive bags
Nothing to Hide - deforestation-free
What is chemical oxygen demand?
Everyone can tell leather's circular story





Together we can be
greener
than you
imagine



comète - www.comete.com - Crédits photos : Shutterstock - ATC



Bringing you the elements of success

We provide "greener", innovative, technically advanced, wet-end and finishing chemicals, giving you the opportunity to produce smart, environmentally aware, stylish products for your customers. When we work together we can create something special wherever you are in the world.

www.atc.fr

News

- 2 **News map** Highlights from around the global leather industry.
- 4 **Industry & Innovation** New technologies and new ideas from leather industry suppliers and service providers.
- 6 **Leatherscene** People from around the industry and famous lovers of leather who have hit the headlines in recent weeks.
- 8 **Backtrack** News headlines from www.leatherbiz.com

Leather Leaders

- 10 **Marc Smit** The seventh-generation owner of 200-year-old leather chemicals group Smit & Zoon insists the leather industry can soon become fully sustainable, and offers seven pieces of advice for young people coming into this business or any other.

Nothing To Hide

- 15 **Nothing To Hide: Essay Three** An updated version of the third essay in the Nothing To Hide series, first published in 2014. Here, we address questions of deforestation and the steps meat and leather producers are taking to combat it.

Technology

- 22 **Split decision** Band-knife manufacturer Lamebo insists splitting hides effectively requires close attention to all the processes involved in leather manufacturing.
- 24 **On a roll** Gemata's versatile roller-coat machine, the Greenstar-s is the result of decades of effort to help tanners improve their technical performance and lower their impact on the environment.
- 26 **Turn down the heat** The FF3 Nero Vacuum Dryer, developed by Cartigliano during a covid-19 lockdown, allows water evaporation at low temperatures.
- 28 **What COD really is** Leather chemicals group Trumpler has undertaken a five-year study into what chemical oxygen demand (COD) really is and its connections to the leather-making process. This is part one of a two-part analysis of the results.
- 33 **Fraud squad** A US-based technology provider, Stardust Materials, believes its traceability solutions could help the makers of leather and leathergoods.

Leather and the Circular Economy

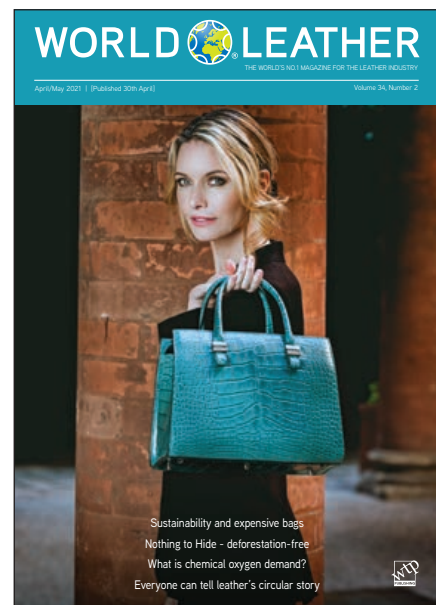
- 38 **Thought Leadership: A story to tell** The European Commission has asked for input in helping it formulate anti-greenwashing policies and legislation on sustainable products. Leather's circular story will not tell itself – it requires the leather community to get involved.
- 42 **Thought Leadership: Material choices** Companies have to start choosing genuinely circular materials because we cannot recycle our way to a circular economy..
- 45 **Thought Leadership: Dare to repair** France's Conseil National du Cuir has highlighted the role that shoe-repair specialists play in emphasising the importance that footwear and leather have for one another.
- 48 **Circular Stories: Leather leftovers** High-end brands, including Loewe and Chloé, are finding interesting and valuable ways to turn surplus leather into products.
- 50 **Circular Stories: Energy-efficient** Footwear brand Sergio Rossi is making great inroads into its use of energy and it pledges to go further.
- 52 **Circular Stories: Expensive, but sustainable** Bologna-based brand Boarini-Milanesi broke the world record last year when it brought out a bag with a price-tag of €6m. Here it explains why this product is sustainable.

Beast to Beauty

- 54 **Budget Day** Always an important moment for the footwear sector, Canada's Budget Day had a special significance in 2021 for the country's new finance minister and a Toronto-based start-up.
- 56 **Essential reading**
- IBC **Advertisers' index**



The World Leather team has been publishing a new series of original, dynamic podcasts regularly since November 2019. The whole series is available on Anchor, Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Pocket Casts, Overcast and other podcasting platforms. Just search for the World Leather Podcast on the platform you prefer.



Cover image: Bags such as this one from Boarini-Milanesi are expensive. The Bologna-based brand is totally convinced this helps makes them sustainable because, having spent so much, customers will keep these beautiful objects for ever. CREDIT: BOARINI-MILANESI



World Leather iPad edition

The world's best leather industry magazine is now available to download on iPad from www.leatherbiz.com



@WTPworldleather



@WTPworldleather



[linkedin.com/showcase/wtpworldleather](https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/wtpworldleather)



@WTPworldleather

World Trades Publishing Ltd 2021.
Contributions: The editor welcomes news items, articles and photographs for consideration and possible publication but no responsibility can be accepted for the loss or non-publication of such material. Opinions expressed by individual contributors do not necessarily reflect the view of the editor or publisher.

- Whilst every effort is made to ensure accuracy in reproduction, no responsibility can be accepted for the technical content or for claims made by manufacturers for product performance that are published. Publication in World Leather cannot be construed as an endorsement for a claim or product by the publisher.

- World Leather is published 6 times per year by World Trades Publishing, 36 Crosby Road North, Liverpool L22 4QQ, UK. Price UK £80, ROW: £135 per year (six issues).

Graphic origination by WTP. Print by Bishops Printers, Walton Road, Portsmouth, Hampshire PO6 1TR, England. All rights reserved. ISSN 0894-3087

World Trades Publishing 2021: All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means mechanical, electronic, recording, photocopying or otherwise, without the written permission of the publisher. World Leather®, Tannery of the Year® and Nothing to Hide® are registered trademarks of World Trades Publishing Ltd.



FRANCE Luxury group Hermès has confirmed that when it sets up the latest in a series of new leathersgoods factories in France, at Riom, near Clermont-Ferrand, it will do so in a disused tobacco factory in the town. Tobacco production in Riom ceased in 1975 and, since then, two of the three buildings at the former factory have been converted into apartments. The local authority's plan always was to try to use the third building to bring some manufacturing activity back to Riom. Hermès's plan will allow this to happen.

UK Luxury carmaker Rolls-Royce has reported record first-quarter sales, up 62% on the same period in 2020. Sales growth was seen in all markets, with the strongest in China, US and Asia Pacific. It delivered 1,380 cars to customers in the first quarter, with order books extending well into the second half of 2021. Bespoke commissions are also at record levels.

SPAIN Mallorca-based footwear manufacturers Camper and Mascaró have presented a formal expression of interest to the Spanish government in using funds from the European Commission's Next Generation EU programme to set up a new production model. Mascaró and Camper want to use the funds, around €25 million, to set up a new production system, to introduce circular economy elements such as material recovery and measures to create shoes with greater longevity.

SWEDEN Fashion group H&M has published its annual report for the 12 months to November 30, 2020. Its revenues fell by 20% year on year to reach approximately \$21.5 billion. In 2020, 100% of the company's suppliers of leather products were signed up to the ZDHC programme. It said its suppliers of leather, finished leather products and textiles achieved 88% compliance with the ZDHC manufacturers' restricted substance lists last year.

BANGLADESH The Bangladesh Tanners Association (BTA) has asked the government to include tax benefits on imported chemicals as part of its plans for helping different parts of the economy recover from covid-19. Chemicals that tanners import for leather manufacturing attract customs duty of 5% and value-added tax of 15%. The BTA has asked the government to lower these to 3% and 7.5% respectively.

SOUTH AFRICA To promote South Africa's Retail, Clothing, Textiles, and Leather Footwear Master Plan, government officials have visited footwear manufacturers, asking them to commit to training and building capacity. Deputy minister of trade, industry and competition, Nomalungelo Gina, said doing business locally must be a priority so investors will view the sector as lucrative. She said: "If we do not support and manufacture our products in the country we have nothing to offer to our neighbours and the rest of the world."

BOTSWANA With the covid-related border closures affecting regular streams of income, a small village in southern Botswana is relying on its sheep flock to generate extra income. The annual Khawa Dune Challenge, a national motorbike rally, has been a major source of income in recent years, but it was cancelled due to the pandemic. Funds have been released by the local council for a slaughterhouse, according to press reports, and designers and artisans are being invited to create accessories and clothing from the sheepskin.

ETHIOPIA Organisers of the XXXVI IULTCS Congress and the fifth World Leather Congress have announced that these will run as hybrid events. Both events will take place in Addis Ababa from November 1-5 this year. With the backdrop of mounting covid-19 pandemic-related restrictions, the organisers said, the hybrid mode will allow those who are unable to attend in person to participate from anywhere in the world.

CHINA The General Administration of Customs in China has reported that the country had a good start to overseas trade in 2021. While exports increased by 38.7% year on year, imports rose by 19.3%. Imports and exports with major trading partners such as the United States, Japan, the European Union and the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries markedly increased over the period.

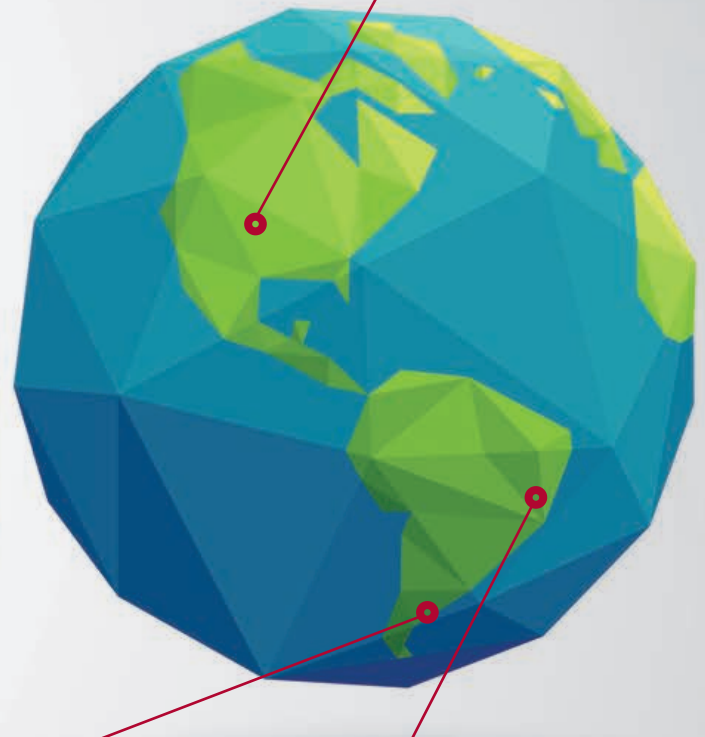
MACAU The doors recently opened to Parisian luxury goods house Hermès' newest Macau store, located on the ground floor of the Galaxy Macau casino resort in the Cotai area of the special administrative region. This latest move broadens the brand's existing retail footprint beyond its current Macau addresses, which already include luxury shopping spaces within the One Central mall, the Wynn and Wynn Palace hotels and the Shoppes at Four Seasons.

US The US's Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) has responded to concerns raised by more than 140 members of Congress about ocean carrier practices that are hampering exports. In a letter sent in March, the FMC sought to reassure political representatives that it is working to address congestion at ports. Port problems are affecting the export of a wide range of US agricultural exports, including hides. It said it will take action against practices that violate laws regulating ocean shipping.



VIETNAM Footwear and leather companies are adapting to the pandemic by investing in digital solutions after turnover fell 11% to \$19.5 billion during 2020, on par with 2018 levels. Nguyen Duc Thuan, chairman of Lefaso, the leather and footwear association, told local media: "We have built online 3D design and trade interfaces for samples. This has helped the industry to get new orders but also created an opportunity to prove to major brands that Vietnam has the capacity to comprehensively design and develop global supply chains."

SOUTH KOREA The ninth edition of leading Italian leathers goods fair Mipel's leather showroom in Seoul took place in April. Despite the negative impact of covid-19 upon the traditional fair model and selling environment, Italian exports to South Korea were up 0.5% on the previous year by 2020's end, Mipel said. The Asian country was the third-largest export market for Italian leathers goods last year.



ARGENTINA The government has continued to allow the export of hides this year at the request of the country's meat companies. However, organisations representing the tanning industry have said exports of raw material should stop right away or 30,000 jobs in the leather manufacturing value chain could be at risk. An organisation representing tannery workers, FATICA, has issued a statement calling on the government to bring exports of wet-salted hides to a halt to ease the pressure on the supply and the price of raw material reaching them.

BRAZIL The country exported leather and hides with a value of \$319.3 million in the first three months this year, an increase of 18.8% compared to the same months last year. In terms of volume, tanners and traders exported 45.6 million square-metres across the three months, a fall of 2% year on year. National industry body CICB said finished leather had accounted for 55.4% of total value between January and March 2021, with wet blue contributing 28.5%. Quantity-wise, finished leather made up 50.7% of the total and wet blue 39.8%.

NEW ZEALAND The first New Zealand-based Collagen Symposium was well attended by industry and research groups, according to organiser The New Zealand Leather and Shoe Research Association (LASRA). The symposium was divided into three themes: commercialisation and regulatory issues; food and nutrition; and industry and innovation.



Luxury groups join forces on blockchain project

VMH, Prada and Cartier have joined forces to develop what they are calling the world's first global luxury blockchain.

They said they had worked together to set up the initiative, the Aura Blockchain Consortium, to address "shared challenges of communicating information on authenticity, responsible sourcing and sustainability in a secure, digital format". It will provide consumers with a high level of transparency and traceability throughout the lifecycle of a product, they said.

It will work by matching information about a product to information about a client through a chain of secure, non-reproducible, digital blocks.

This will enable consumers to access the history of a product and proof of its authenticity at every step of the value chain, the companies stated, from raw materials to point of sale. They added that Aura will represent a new way for luxury brands to communicate with consumers, "telling a unique story around the quality of their materials, craftsmanship and creativity, and strengthening the relationship between client and brand".

Ryanair opts for Muirhead's 25% weight saving

Low-cost airline Ryanair has chosen lightweight, full-substance leather from Muirhead to cover the seats in 175 of its Boeing 737-800 and 737 MAX aircraft.

Muirhead said the leather Ryanair had chosen was designed specifically for the aviation industry, was easy to clean and offered a weight saving of 25% on the company's standard leather.

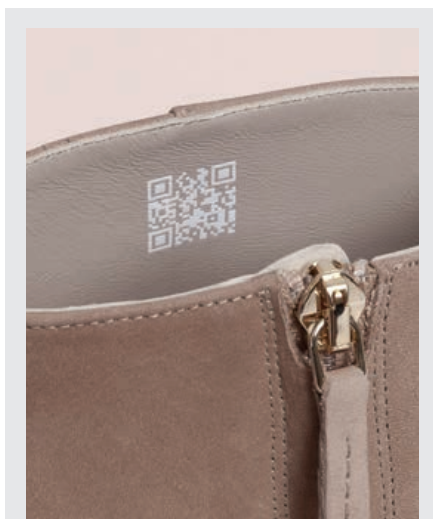
It said this would contribute to the efficiency of aircraft turnaround times and make substantial lifetime weight savings for customers.

Update of Stahl range

Leather chemicals manufacturer Stahl has launched a new version of its Stahlite range of solutions for automotive leather production. Stahlite, which the company introduced in 2012, is designed for use in the retanning and fatliquoring stages of leather production and replaces conventional retanning and softening agents with specialty polymers.

These polymers penetrate more thoroughly into the leather fibre structure, Stahl claims, to coat the fibre bundles and fibrils with a smooth layer. The result is a lightweight automotive leather that, compared with traditional leather, delivers weight savings of up to 30%.

The chemicals manufacturer told *World Leather* that it had changed the product mix



Breakthrough for Spoor

Certification body Oeko-Tex has said it will work with Danish company Spoor to increase the transparency component of its standards and labelling for leather.

Spoor, a spin-off from Danish wet blue and wet white producer Scan-Hide, uses a laser-technology based system for marking and identifying hides. Its system allows it and brands who use leather made from its hides to provide access to the whole life-story of the animals the raw material comes from.

Oeko-Tex said it had set up an alliance with Spoor because it wanted to add a greater transparency component to its standards and labels.

for this updated version of Stahlite, integrating technology that it has brought on board since 2012 through its acquisition of the leather chemicals divisions of Clariant and BASF and its exclusive representation of Proviera.

Compared to traditional processes, Stahl said use of the new range of products could reduce chemical oxygen demand (COD) by more than 50% and biological oxygen demand by up to 80%.

New-generation bio-stimulants from leather

Vicenza-based biotech company ILSA has announced that it will acquire 120,000 tonnes of leather trimmings over the next three years and transform the material into bio-stimulants for agriculture.

ILSA, one of the partners in the 'Green Leather Industry for the Environment' project, which ran from 2014-2017, has said the new products will be suitable for use in organic farming and will be "in perfect alignment with the principles of the circular economy".

Company president, Paolo Girelli, explained that ILSA will take scraps and trimmings from a number of tanning clusters around the world. He said 120,000 tonnes of trimmings will produce more than 90,000 tonnes of biostimulants.

Already, ILSA is transforming around 85,000 tonnes of tanning waste per year to make solid and liquid protein hydrolysates rather than let the material be discarded, which it has said would have "a disastrous impact on the environment". Its technology processes allow it to transform the waste, which is rich in amino acids, into special, high-performance agricultural inputs with a very low environmental impact.

It now wants to use patented processes to develop a new generation of biostimulants which, when placed close to the roots of plants, will activate microorganisms present in the soil.

Once-in-a-century changes inspire Lexus

Automotive group Lexus is to build a new business and technical centre. It will be part of the Toyota Technical Center Shimoyama in Japan's Aichi Prefecture.

The new facility will house the development, design and planning of Lexus cars. It said the new centre would help it address what it called a once-in-a-century period of change in the automotive industry.

It said that there was a "growing social mission of carbon neutrality and compliance with the Sustainable Development Goals" on the one hand, coupled with customers' lifestyles and values changing and diversifying "at a speed previously beyond imagination".

Self-inflicted harm, Jon Clark warns

The chief executive of tanning group PrimeAsia, Jon Clark, has said the leather industry has still not recovered from the business it lost after hide prices reached record high levels in 2014.

In recent comments on social media, Mr Clark said high raw material costs at the time, with heavy native steer hides reaching \$115 each (compared to around \$45 at the start of March 2021), opened the door to cheaper alternatives.

Mr Clark said innovative material manufacturers "came through with a slew of non-leather options to replace expensive and fiscally inconsistent leather". There was what he called "an innovation surge and replacement surge" from which the leather industry has not recovered.

He said that the short-term gains meat companies achieve by increasing the price of hides leads to a degradation in long-term demand for that by-product and he said he was sure there were people in the meat

industry who understood this well.

He expressed frustration that meat companies were once again raising the price of hides and called this “self-inflicted, long-term harm”.

Muirhead offers antiviral leather

Glasgow-based specialist leather manufacturer Muirhead, part of Scottish Leather Group, recently unveiled bespoke Muirhead active hygiene leather, which the company described as “an immediate material solution to the challenges of covid-19”.

Swedish antimicrobial solutions provider Polygiene’s ViralOff technology has been built into Muirhead’s leather at the manufacturing stage, for “enhanced hygiene” and “permanent, always-on protection”, the Scottish manufacturer said.

Reportedly, the new active hygiene leather eliminates 99% of viruses and bacteria from leather seat surfaces within two hours, without the need for cleaning or otherwise sanitising the material’s surface.

Muirhead said that neither performance, appearance nor sustainability had been compromised by the treatment, which is available now on all bespoke orders.

Virtual SLTC conference goes ahead

The UK’s Society of Leather Technologists and Chemists (SLTC) held its 2021 international conference as a virtual event, hosted by the University of Northampton.

Chief executive of leather and leather products manufacturing group Pittards, Reg Hankey, delivered the Atkin Memorial Lecture, the event’s keynote speech, named after former SLTC president, W. R. Atkin.

A virtual tour of the university’s Institute of Creative Leather Technology (ICLT) followed. Speakers in the conference’s second session included Dr Matt Walker from Trumpler, Elisa Palomino from Central Saint Martin’s in London and Dr Stefan Davies from ICLT.

Session three consisted of a panel discussion on the sustainability of leather, chaired by Dr Christine Anscombe of SATRA. Panel members were Deborah Taylor from the Sustainable Leather Foundation, Dr Kerry Senior from Leather UK, Dr Wolfram Scholz from W2O Environment and Dr Matt Walker from Trumpler.

Hub expands

Luxury group Kering has announced that the second phase of a new global logistics hub it is building in Italy will soon be in operation. Kering began operating

the first phase of the new hub, which is in Trecate, 40 kilometres west of Milan, in March 2020. The facility will cover more than 160,000 square-metres. From here, Kering will be able to distribute up to 80 million products per year and store up to 20 million. The group has said the new, high-tech distribution centre will reduce lead times by 50% and so “enhance collaboration with brands”.

Audit impact

Multi-stakeholder body Leather Working Group (LWG) has introduced material traceability as a scored section in its audits. This means that having exposure to deforestation will negatively impact medal ratings. LWG said its vision for the future is for 100% deforestation-free leather.

Size clarity

Argentina’s government has given footwear manufacturers and retailers with a presence in the market there until the end of July to make sure Argentinean sizes are clearly displayed on their products and on boxes they come in. It said this would be fairer for local consumers and also give a boost to locally produced footwear. In Argentina, shoes sized 41 would correspond to European size 42, US size 8.5 and UK size 8.

LCA complete

Tanning group PrimeAsia has announced the completion of a 12-month exercise to carry out a lifecycle assessment (LCA) of its leather production. It said it had concentrated on using the “high-quality primary data” that came out of a detailed analysis of all elements that contribute to the environmental impact of its production processes. This evaluation covered 266 process phases, collecting 3,000 data points from operations in five different countries.

CSR progress

Leather chemicals manufacturer Smit & Zoon has published a new corporate social responsibility (CSR) report, giving a detailed assessment of its environmental and social performance in 2020.

In the report, the company outlines “strong progress” it has made towards fulfilling the mission it has set itself; it wants to create a socially and environmentally sustainable leather supply chain by 2025.

It achieved level-three conformance (the highest level) with the Zero Discharge of Hazardous Chemicals (ZDHC) programme for its whole product range. Another achievement the report points to is the introduction of products such as the

Optitan retanning range that produce good results in tanneries while reducing application dosages, chemical oxygen demand, salinity, conductivity, free monomers in wastewater and volumes of total dispensed solids.

In addition, the report points to the launch during 2020 of Smit & Zoon’s Zeology tanning concept, which it has described as a sustainable, chrome-free alternative to existing tanning systems.

Stahl publishes environmental report

Leather chemicals manufacturer Stahl has published a report on its performance in environmental and social governance in 2020. The report outlines the company’s sustainable development achievements last year and offers a reminder of what its future ambitions are in this area.

The group had already published a series of environmental and social commitments and targets, some for 2023 and others for 2030. Stahl has said these commitments underpin its efforts to help shape “a better chemicals industry, one that enables high living standards within planetary boundaries”.

One of its highlights include a transition to renewable feedstock. In 2020, Stahl stated that, it took concrete steps toward eliminating non-renewable carbon resources such as coal, oil, and natural gas as feedstocks for its raw materials. It exceeded its five-year CO₂ emissions target, and has set new goals for 2030. The company also launched two new portfolios of products based on renewable feedstocks.

In 2020, Stahl also implemented new criteria for safety, health, and environment (SHE) standards and process safety. Part of this is to report more accurately on safety incidents. It will roll out globally its methodology for hazard identification and risk assessment.

Another achievement last year was reaching level-three status, the highest level, in conforming with the requirements of the Zero Discharge of Hazardous Chemicals (ZDHC) programme. This applied to 1,200 products in Stahl’s global portfolio. It said it wanted to “go beyond minimum information disclosure and regulatory compliance”.

Outgoing chief executive, Huub van Beijeren, said at the time the report was published that, if 2020 taught Stahl anything, it was that there are always new challenges for businesses and for wider society to face. He said he was pleased the group had still been able to take important steps forward in meeting its ambitions. 🌍



Covid claims designer

Designer **Alber Elbaz**, long-time creative director of Lanvin, died in Paris on April 24 from covid-19, at the age of 59.

Mr Elbaz was born in Morocco but grew up in Israel. He began his career in fashion in New York but had been based in Paris for 25 years.

He had spells at Guy Laroche and Saint Laurent before joining Lanvin in 2001. He became the brand's creative director and worked there until 2015.

In the years that followed, Mr Elbaz worked on projects for a wide variety of fashion brands, including Tod's. In 2019, with the backing of Richemont, he founded the AZ Factory label.

Choice of champions

The Leather and Hide Council of America (LHCA), the representative body for the US leather industry, has unveiled the second in a series of videos as part of an international campaign communicating the natural, sustainable and durable nature of leather. It features Thai boxing champion and fashion blogger **Yoyo Sun**.

Launched under the banner of LHCA's Real Leather, Stay Different campaign, the video is the second in a series of three looking at nature and sustainability, the importance of sourcing quality leather and leather in fashion and sport. With a focus on the next generation of consumers, the campaign is running entirely on social channels, including WeChat and Weibo in China and Instagram and Facebook around the world.

LHCA has also announced the winners for China of its 2021 student design competition. LHCA organised the competition in partnership with the China Leather Industry Association (CLIA).

Gold winners in each of the competition's three categories were: **Yuying Gan**, Tsinghua University, for garments; **Zhen Wang**, Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology, for footwear; and **Shanshan Yang**, Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology, for accessories.

Price tells the story

The president of France's Conseil National du Cuir, **Franck Boehly**, has said consumers who are concerned about the provenance of the leather in shoes or other products they buy should pay attention to price.

In recent comments to business media outlet BFM, Mr Boehly said it was true that finished product brands were under no obligation to say which country the leather they use comes from, but he said that the price of a product could be an indicator of the levels of environmental and social care



Maserati signs David Beckham as brand ambassador

Luxury car company Maserati has named former footballer **David Beckham** as a new brand ambassador. He said at the time of the announcement that he shared Maserati's appreciation of excellence and commitment to pursuing "the very best innovation and design".

For its part, Maserati described the former Manchester United, Real Madrid, LA Galaxy, AC Milan and Paris Saint German player not just as a "sporting legend", but also as a "style icon, businessman and philanthropist".

It said David Beckham, who is now the president and co-owner of US Major League Soccer club Inter Miami CF, as "the perfect partner as we drive our brand forward into our new era".

manufacturers are investing in.

He said: "A consumer who buys a pair of shoes for €20 cannot expect that the quality will be the same as in a pair that costs €200. Things [in the global leather supply chain] will change when consumers stop buying those cheap products. This is exactly what happened with eggs from battery hens. Manufacturers never produce items that they cannot sell."

Tributes as colleague loses cancer battle

Leather industry leaders have paid tribute to **Neil Perrin**, who has died following a long battle with cancer.

Mr Perrin spent his entire professional life in the leather industry, studying leather manufacturing in Northampton before joining Pittards in 1980. He spent 17 years there before moving to Asia to become director of manufacturing at PrimeAsia, spending a decade at the group.

After a short spell with Shanghai Richina, Neil Perrin joined Ecco and ran the group's tanneries in Thailand, China and Indonesia. After leaving Ecco at the end of 2016, he joined Swiss-based leather trading company KT Trading. He was based in Hong Kong for the last few years and continued to work in a consultancy capacity.

On learning of Mr Perrin's death,

PrimeAsia chief executive, **Jon Clark**, said he was fondly remembered as one of the people who had helped create what PrimeAsia is today. Pittards chief executive, **Reg Hankey**, said Mr Perrin had been a well respected colleague there who had gone on to have a successful career in the global leather industry.

Turkish minister wants more sheep and fewer cattle

Tanners in Turkey took note recently when a minister in the country's government called on farmers to raise more sheep and fewer cattle and urged consumers to eat more lamb and mutton and less beef.

Deputy minister of agriculture and forestry, **Ayşe Aysin Isikgece**, recently told local media that she wanted the country's herd size of 20 million head of cattle to decrease and its sheep herd of 50 million head to increase.

She said the reason was that cattle have a higher carbon footprint than sheep.

Luxury brands must focus on what's unique

Chief executive of Walpole, the official body for the UK luxury industry, **Helen Brocklebank**, has said she believes "hyper-localisation" will be one of the keys for a successful recovery for her member

companies following covid-19.

In comments to media in Asia, Ms Brocklebank said that when visitors are allowed to return to the UK and to visit the boutiques and shops the 270 Walpole members run there, offering products that are not available anywhere else will be an important strategy.

She explained that, for many high-end consumers now, a smartphone is a "window onto everything". In the face of this, she urged luxury brands to focus on what is unique about the products they can offer so that visitors will have something special to show off when they return home. The chief executive suggested that products made in the UK from local materials would hold a strong appeal.

Lovato is committee president for Vicenza congress

The Italian Leather Chemists Association (AICC) has chosen **Dr Giancarlo Lovato** to be the president of the organising committee for the third IULTCS EuroCongress, which will take place in Vicenza in the autumn of 2022.

Delegates attending the congress will hear about technical and scientific innovations in the tanning sector and will be able to visit tanneries in the nearby Arzignano cluster. They will be invited to spend three days, September 18-20, 2022, in the area. This will make it easy for them to travel to Milan later the same week to attend the Lineapelle exhibition.

Dr Lovato is currently the secretary of AICC. He is the manager of research and development for leather chemicals at Corichem, having previously worked at TFL, Chimes (now part of GSC Group) and Chemipal. He has contributed to product patents and has written papers for industry journals on chemical innovations for the beamhouse, the wet end and for finishing.

Deal for Clarks completes: Chinese billionaire now involved

Hong Kong-based private equity firm LionRock Capital has confirmed the completion of its "partnership" with footwear group Clarks, announced towards the end of 2020. LionRock Capital will acquire a majority stake in the business for an investment of £100 million.

It announced that **Victor Herrero** has taken over as chief executive of Clarks, replacing **Giorgio Presca**. Mr Herrero was formerly chief executive of Guess and, before that, held several senior roles at Inditex, including the position of head of Asia Pacific and managing director for China.

LionRock managing director, **Daniel Tseung**, said: "We are extremely pleased to formalise our partnership with Clarks.

Clarks is one of the world's most recognised consumer names and we look forward to working with the Clark family and Clarks' leadership team to build on its tradition of providing customers around the world with top-quality products and exceptional service."

Since LionRock's initial announcement in November, former Olympic gymnast and entrepreneur **Li Ning** has acquired a 51% stake in LionRock and is now its non-executive chairman. Mr Li's own-name brand achieved revenues of \$2.1 billion in 2019 and currently has a network of nearly 7,000 stores across China.

On the completion of LionRock's acquisition of a majority stake in Clarks, Li Ning said: "I am thrilled that LionRock Capital is partnering with one of the UK's most iconic brands during this momentous new phase for the business. We look forward to leveraging our network and experience to support Clarks through the next phase of development."

World Leather runs two APLF Academy events

The team from *World Leather* contributed to the launch of the APLF Academy series of online events in April, running a roundtable discussion called What Makes the World's Leading Tanners Successful? This focused on three leather manufacturing groups that have won the Tannery of the Year global award: Pittards Ethiopia, Wollsdorf Leather and Interhides.

Participants included **Reg Hankey** and **Tsedenia Mekbib** from Pittards Ethiopia, **Andreas Kindermann** from Wollsdorf and **Chris Thumrongsakunvong** from Interhides.

In a second debate the guests were the vice-president of procurement at tanning group PrimeAsia, **Ian Scher**, secretary to the International Council of Tanners, **Dr Kerry Senior**, and the president of the Leather and Hide Council of America **Stephen Sothmann**.

They discussed questions such as the availability of hides, the importance for the fight against climate change for the material to be made into leather rather than go to waste, the links between animal welfare and the growing demand for traceability and transparency in the leather supply chain and the role that leather manufacturers are now playing in promoting the best possible treatment of the animals that supply their raw material.

UK industry figure to retire

After almost 40 years in the leather industry, **Barry Knight**, sales development manager at UK tannery Thomas Ware & Sons (TWS), has announced his retirement.

Mr Knight began his career at traditional pit

tanning company Joseph Clayton and Sons in Chesterfield, England. He worked his way up through the company, becoming sales director in 2004 and general manager in 2007.

He left in 2010 to join the Bristol-based TWS, where responsibilities included introducing traditional vegetable-tanned leathers to Asian markets.

Alistair Brearley, managing director at TWS, said Mr Knight had brought fresh ideas to the company and that his positive outlook rubbed off on everybody.

Brothers' Delvaux dilemma

Billionaire brothers **Victor** and **William Fung**, who run Hong Kong-based supply company Li & Fung, may sell their stake in Belgian leathers company Delvaux, Bloomberg has reported. Advisers have already reached out to prospective suitors, the news outlet said, but it added that the Fungs may yet change their minds.

Japan plan

LVMH unveiled the first edition of its Institut des Métiers d'Excellence (IME) vocational training program in Asia in April. It welcomed 12 participants in Japan. The course will last for one year. Those taking part are exempt from tuition fees and will receive a living allowance during their training. Upon completing the programme, participants will have the opportunity to work as customer advisors at one of 12 LVMH brands in Japan.

Permanent position

Luxury group Tapestry has announced **Todd Kahn** as the new chief executive of leathergoods brand Coach. Mr Kahn has been part of the leadership team at Coach since 2008 and was executive vice-president and company secretary when **Jide Zeitlin** stepped down as group chief executive in July 2020. New group chief executive, **Joanne Crevoiserat**, made Todd Kahn the interim chief executive of Coach and has now confirmed him in the role on a permanent basis.

VIP visitors

As part of a Parliamentary Day event in Russia's Ostashkov district, a delegation of local politicians visited Volga Tannery, where they learned about the leathermaking process. Chairman of the legislative assembly of the Tver region, **Sergey Anatolyevich Golubev**, chairman of the standing committee on social policy, **Babushkin Artur Elksovich**, and chairman of the standing committee on economic policy and entrepreneurship, **Lebedev Oleg Stanislavovich**, joined Volga's chairman, **Alexandr Alexandrovich Kulikov** and senior staff on the tour. 📷

World Leather's publishing cycle and limitations on space make it impossible for us to run more than a carefully selected sample of news from across the industry. However, we publish hundreds more stories on *leatherbiz.com*. The site is updated every day with news from every continent and every part of the industry, making *leatherbiz.com* one of the most comprehensive archives of news anywhere on the web for the global leather industry.

We list below just a few of the headlines that have appeared on the site in recent weeks and can still be accessed.

28/04/2021

USDA revises 2021 beef consumption upwards
Hermès and Rolls-Royce in rare partnership
Toddlers appreciate Bentley comfort

27/04/2021

Timberland expands Regenerative Leather initiative
LVMH materials resale platform confirmed

26/04/2021

Taobao's second-hand luxury sales surpass \$1.5bn

23/04/2021

Leather target among Caleres' five-year goals
LVMH increases Tod's stake to 10%
Mulberry announces new approach to sourcing leather

22/04/2021

Growth in Q1 for Stella International
LHCA vows no US hides will be wasted
A 'robust' ride: Hermès' Q1 'odyssey'

21/04/2021

'Above pre-pandemic levels': Kering basks in Gucci-dominated Q1 glow
Farm programme offers tanner guarantee of quality

20/04/2021

US ban of kangaroo products would be own goal, say professors

19/04/2021

Bricks and mortar: Balenciaga enters South America
Ryanair opts for Muirhead's 25% weight saving
Biocircular concept wins tanner's vote of confidence

16/04/2021

Brazil: boost for leather-sector components, machinery and chemicals
"Strong progress" on CSR for Smit & Zoon

15/04/2021

Wenzhou 2.0: digital-first 'fashion shoe town'
Stahl publishes environmental report

13/04/2021

Record Q1 result for LVMH leathergoods
LHCA's efforts to dispel myths will continue

12/04/2021

Cash available to help Japanese leather companies recover from covid-19

09/04/2021

Boost for III IULTCS EuroCongress
Vicenza's organisers

08/04/2021

Supplier support for LCA earns praise from PrimeAsia
Seoul-based luxury platform sees sales rise by 75%

07/04/2021

Jobs rebound in Brazilian footwear
New WeChat report suggests slowed growth for luxury brands

06/04/2021

Three-quarters of LVMH tanneries LWG certified last year
UNIC raises alarm on price rises

05/04/2021

Douyin (Chinese TikTok) launches in-app flagship storefronts for brands
APLF's new digital platform will offer year-round sourcing

31/03/2021

All-digital Mipel running until mid-July

30/03/2021

Leather's sustainability contribution should be better known
Daphne International's revenues drop 83%

29/03/2021

LVMH Métiers d'Art exhibition postponed

26/03/2021

SLF and Oeko-Tex join forces to support leather industry

25/03/2021

Ford gifts leftover leather to social enterprises
China's full-year leather imports fell overall, but a mixed bag
JBS to invest \$1bn to hit zero GHG by 2040

24/03/2021

'Sluggish' 2020 leather exports for China
New showroom for Au-Delà du Cuir
Former LV designer offers fresh take on leathergoods classics

23/03/2021

Zimbabwe: Companies join forces to promote leathergoods
The daigou-approved 'most popular' handbags in China in February

22/03/2021

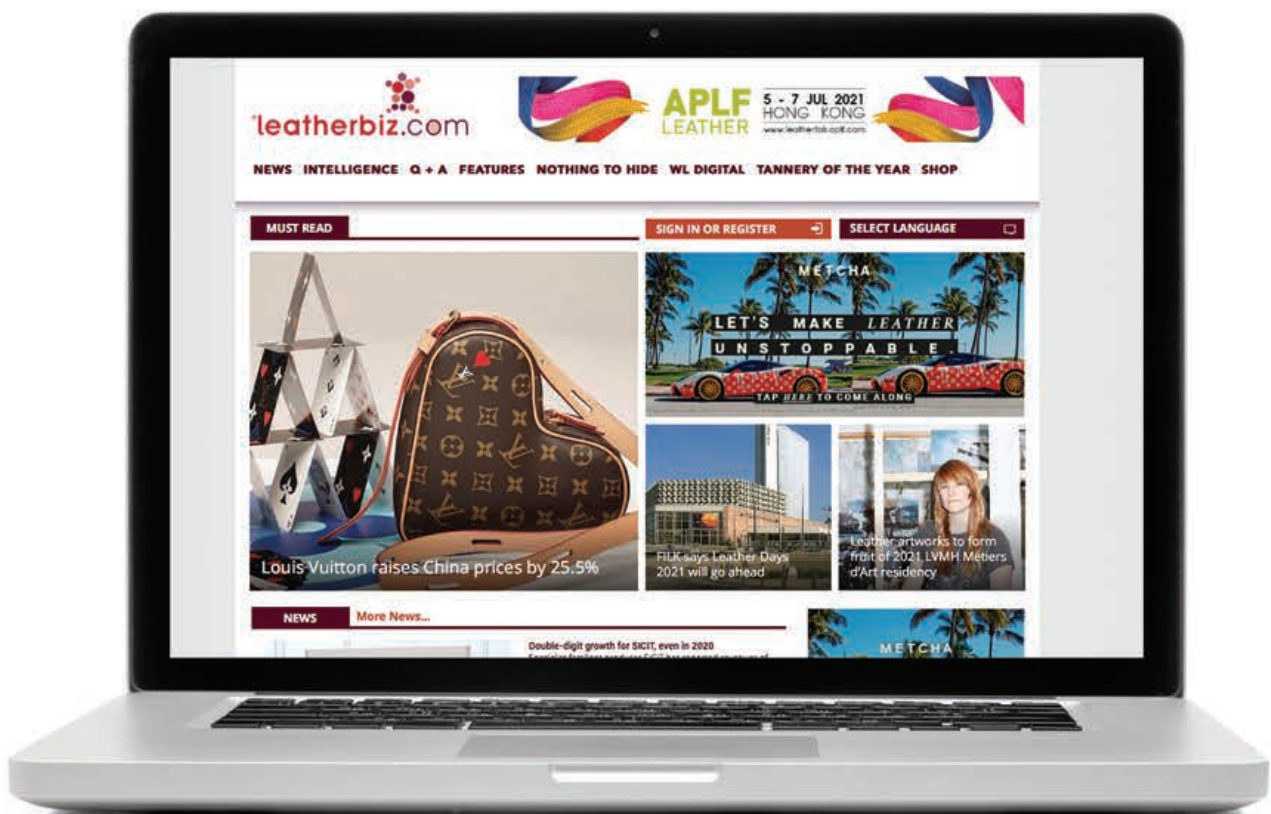
UBS says Kering-Richemont tie-up could make sense
Duty-free advances in Hainan and Shenzhen
Decline of just over 25% for Stella International
April, the cruellest month for Italian leathergoods

19/03/2021

Biotech firm to develop new-generation bio-stimulants from leather scraps
Burberry doubles down on digital with virtual store
OIE launches reference platform for animal health

18/03/2021

Pakistan's finished leather exports fall steeply
Tuscan-made leathergoods brand now a B Corp
Italy's footwear production falls a quarter in 2020



Visit the **new** and **improved** site



CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY - WEALTH OF EXPERIENCE

Contact Simon Yarwood simon@worldtrades.co.uk for more information



This year, 2021, marks the 200th anniversary of leather chemicals group Smit & Zoon. In this interview, Marc Smit, the seventh-generation owner of the business, reflects on what it takes to keep a company going for so long and on the mission of helping to make the leather value chain sustainable by 2025.

Mission possible

From comments you have made in recent years, it's clear that it means a lot to you, personally, for Smit & Zoon to reach the important milestone of 200 years in business. What would you say are the main reasons why Smit & Zoon, specifically, has been able to continue for so long?

Customers always ask about this, how we have lasted for such a long period, surviving two World Wars and a number of other crises. Well, you have to be lucky at times, but I think you can increase the chances of success by looking more long-term, focusing on things that you think will happen in ten or 15 years' time. I, as was my father, was raised with the thought that a family business is not something you own. It's something you get as a loan. You have to take care of it, but your duty is to pass it on in the most successful way possible to the next generation. That means thinking about the challenges and opportunities that will come across our paths in the next 20 or 25 years. That forces you to think constantly about how to overcome those challenges and how to make the most of the opportunities. I think that helps drive a business.

In what ways did studying economics prepare you and help you before taking up a lead role in running the company? What are the aspects of running a global company that your studies prepared you for less well?

Well, it was quite a long time ago, but what I remember is that they taught me how to run a company by the numbers and how to improve the numbers. And that helped because it gave me confidence from the beginning from a financial point of view. But there's so much more than only theory, you really learn by doing things yourself. I think you can increase the chances of success through many different factors that you do not learn at university.

What would you tell students and young entrepreneurs today that your teachers did not tell you?

As I'm a seventh-generation company owner, I have seven pieces of advice for young entrepreneurs and students. First, you have to be hard on your own opinions. You have to stay critical. I have often been confronted by arguments why certain ideas would not work. People have a tendency to stay in their comfort zone; they want to do the things they've always done. It's important to challenge them and take them out of the comfort zone and you should lead by example. You should go out of your own comfort zone. Second, you should always search for the best people, people who will take ownership and help you grow, people who will challenge you. Good people want freedom and they want to decide things, but this can help you achieve the growth you are looking for. Third, you should be a teacher; you should share your ideas and you should

“When you look at recent statistics that show that 60% of young people in Europe still believe that cows are being killed for leather, it shows that we still have a long way to go.”

repeat what you say rather than say it only once. Fourth, you should respect people who have less power than you do. This is a value I care a lot about. I don't care how important you are; I judge you on how you treat people who are less powerful. Five, stick with your values and make sure everybody in the company shares those values. If there are people who do not, get rid of them because they will ruin your company and everything you stand for. Six, don't rush and don't panic because you will soon be dead anyway. Take a moment and do not kill long-term goals unless you have proof that they are wrong. Otherwise, keep faith that the things you started are the right ones. And seven, look for people like you outside your company and share with them the things you struggle with. It's not only about business, it's about personal and family affairs too. I joined an organisation called Entrepreneurs Organization (EO) 12 years ago and I am still learning every day from that experience. We share experiences of family, personal and business life. The nice thing about it is that it's very important that you only share experiences. You don't share your opinion; that's not valuable.

You will know very well that in Japan there is a high regard for businesses that have been running for a long time and that there is even a word, 'shinise', for companies that have that status. It may come as a surprise to see Nintendo's name among the 'shinise', but long before video games were thought of, Nintendo was a successful manufacturer of playing-cards. Its transition happened at just the right time. Smit & Zoon's transition to specialty chemicals for leather came relatively recently, in the context of 200 years' history. Was this a difficult decision at the time? What made this move successful?

I have a picture from the early 1950s of our first [exhibition] stand in Utrecht in Holland and we're showing some products for leather. But it was at the end of the 1960s when it really developed strongly. The reason why we



Man with a mission. Marc Smit wants the whole leather value chain to be sustainable before he passes on the Smit & Zoon baton.

ALL CREDITS: SMIT & ZOON





decided to enter the leather industry was that our core business at that time, cod liver oil, was coming to an end. The pharmaceutical industry was starting to produce vitamins. Vitamins became way more popular than cod liver oil, which tasted horrible. Thinking ahead ten or 15 years about what would be the next challenge and opportunity, we began looking at other industries. One of those industries was leather, which was already using a lot of fish oil at that time. It was cheap and it made very soft leather, so it was a logical step with the products we were selling to enter a new market and a growing market for us at the time.

What has the acquisition of Codyeco in 2017 meant for Smit & Zoon?

It has been important and the reason for that relates to the mission that we already had in place. The mission is to have a sustainable leather value chain by about 2025. This is what we are aiming for and Codyeco gave us a stronger presence in luxury shoes and leather articles. It has given us a better understanding of the needs of the fashion industry and therefore it fits in well with our mission. With their help and their contacts we are better able than before to start a discussion with the customers of our customers.

What is your view of the leather chemicals industry in general in 2021?

Well, I think the leather chemical industry is in a critical phase now. We need to come up with ideas and solutions to contribute to [presenting leather as] a sustainable material. In my opinion, leather is under threat. The current situation doesn't help, with shortages of raw materials and tremendous price increases all around the globe. Price increases for chemicals don't help us as the value chain still has this very strong focus on costs. We should take care to improve our value chain in order to be able to produce the most sustainable material available. It's possible to do that, especially when you take into consideration the benefits leather has as a product compared to the plastic alternatives. So it's a difficult period now, I think, for everybody. We really need to change. Change is needed to make it [leather] a sustainable product for the future.

Last year, at the time of the launch of Nera and Zeology, Smit & Zoon talked about this being the start of "an era of truly sustainable leather manufacturing". What obstacles do you see on the path towards that goal?

I think there are many obstacles, but most of your readers will probably know this already. I think most of the obstacles are related to the negative information you can read about leather. This makes people think negative thoughts about leather. I prefer always to talk about opportunities rather than obstacles. Talking about obstacles won't help us. The opportunity is that we have a fantastic by-product that can be turned into a fantastic, sustainable piece of material. That's the challenge we have and it's the whole value chain that has to deal with it. We must do it together, not only we as chemical suppliers; we have our own duty, but we need the whole chain for it to really change. If we do that, then we solve the challenges we are facing and we can start promoting the beauty of leather. Then I see a really good future ahead.



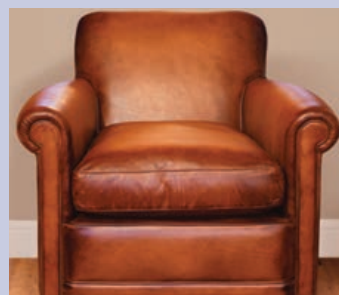
Zeo White leather made using Zeology, a new tanning system offering leather that is chrome-free, heavy metal-free and aldehyde-free, from new Smit & Zoon subsidiary Nera.

Something else we know from paying close attention to what you have said in recent years is that passing on a healthy, prosperous, successful business to the eighth generation and beyond is very important to you. What are the characteristics that Smit & Zoon will need to have in place for you to pass the baton on with confidence?

We need to continue to work on our mission and to make the leather value chain sustainable. We have to work on our own goals to support the industry by bringing chemicals or solutions to the market that have a minimum impact on the environment. We are making efforts to support the whole chain, but we need support to make it happen. This [leather chemicals] is the part we can influence and we are investing heavily. I'm very confident that I can pass the baton to the eighth generation. In the end we are also dependent on end-consumer behaviour, right? They also need to value the beauty of leather and see it as a fantastic, sustainable by-product. When you look at recent statistics that show that 60% of young people in Europe still believe that cows are being killed for leather, it shows that we still have a long way to go. If we only talk among ourselves saying we don't understand why companies don't use leather because leather is way more sustainable, it doesn't help us in the end. Brands in the car industry sell cars, they do not sell leather, but they will sell leather if their end consumer asks for leather. Our aim should be to convince the end consumer that leather is a fantastic product. That is a big challenge. If 60% of the younger generation in Europe think cows are killed for leather, it's completely the wrong starting-point. That's why we want to play a catalysing role and not just focus on chemicals. Our sustainability manager, Egbert Dikkers, plays a role in Leather Naturally. We support that because we think it's important that we invest in this. Leather Naturally is a good tool for promoting leather, especially to younger people. 🌱



USA: Your Source for Top Quality Raw Materials



The US is the global leather industry's preferred supplier of hides, skins and wet blue leather products.

- Over 31 Million Cattle Hides and Wet Blue Products Produced Each Year
- Favorable Climate Conditions for Grain Quality
- Large Variety and Availability of Cattle, Pig/Sow, Sheep, Goat, Deer, and Other Animal Products
- Top of the Line Animal Husbandry and Processing Practices
- Professional Industry Management
- Reliable Industry Trade Standards – *The Standards Governing the Sale of North American Cattle Hides*



Find out more by visiting the U.S. Hide, Skin and Leather Association at www.ushsa.org

Bringing tradition
to the future.



Nothing to Hide: Essay three: Forests and cattle farming



Nelore cattle on pastureland in Brazil.
CREDIT: BRASTOCK/SHUTTERSTOCK

Executive summary

Brazil is one of the most important sources in the world of food and productivity improvements have allowed it to go from requiring food aid in the 1970s to producing enough food for 1.4 billion people every year. Its own population is 210 million. Food producers in Brazil intend to increase productivity further in the years ahead.

However, livestock farming and (as a consequence) leather production have frequently been linked to deforestation in sensitive regions in Brazil, most famously in the Amazon biome. Land has been cleared there to raise cattle or grow crops that farmers then use to feed cattle. In some cases, campaign groups and finished product brands have sought to place the blame for this on the entire Brazilian meat and leather sectors.

This is to miss or dismiss a wide array of projects that some of the biggest players in meat and leather in Brazil, and indeed the world, have been engaged in for years to guard against deforestation. They are monitoring their suppliers carefully and intend to use blockchain technology to go a step further and monitor also their suppliers' suppliers. They are working with partners in government, technology providers and local communities to help preserve the environment in the Amazon and other sensitive biomes.

These projects have already had a degree of success and prominent meat and leather companies believe they are on the way to making their supply chains completely deforestation-free. 🌱

About this essay

The first version of this essay was published in *World Leather* June-July 2014. Most of the original material came from Fernando Bellese, who was then marketing and sustainability manager at JBS Couros, the leather division of the Brazilian meat and tanning group. He is now the chief sustainability officer of PrimeAsia. This new version of Nothing To Hide: essay three updates as much of the original data as possible and brings details of a number of projects and initiatives that JBS and others have launched since 2014.

Sources of the data include the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation and Trase Insights.



Nothing to Hide:

Action to keep the leather value chain deforestation-free

Campaign groups continue to link beef and, by extension, leather production in Brazil to deforestation in the Amazon and other environmentally sensitive regions of the country. This essay highlights some of the work major players continue to do to make their supply chains deforestation-free.

Agricultural research body Embrapa hails food production progress in Brazil since the 1970s as a big success story, with benefits for the whole of humanity. In the 1970s, international organisations had to send food donations to Brazil to prevent hunger in some parts of the population. Now, the country, which has a population of 210 million, produces enough food to sustain 1.4 billion people per year and is the world's second-biggest exporter of food, after the US.

According to Embrapa, science, entrepreneurship and the country's richness in natural resources are the factors that have allowed this transformation to take place. This combination has, for example, helped bring about a 500% increase in cereal production since the 1970s from a 70% increase in land devoted to those crops. Four decades ago, the Brasilia-based organisation has said, production was around one tonne of grain from each hectare of land that farmers sowed. This has now increased to 3.8 tonnes per hectare. It argues that

Black Line

Your **next drum** is not just a drum



easier and
faster loading
and unloading



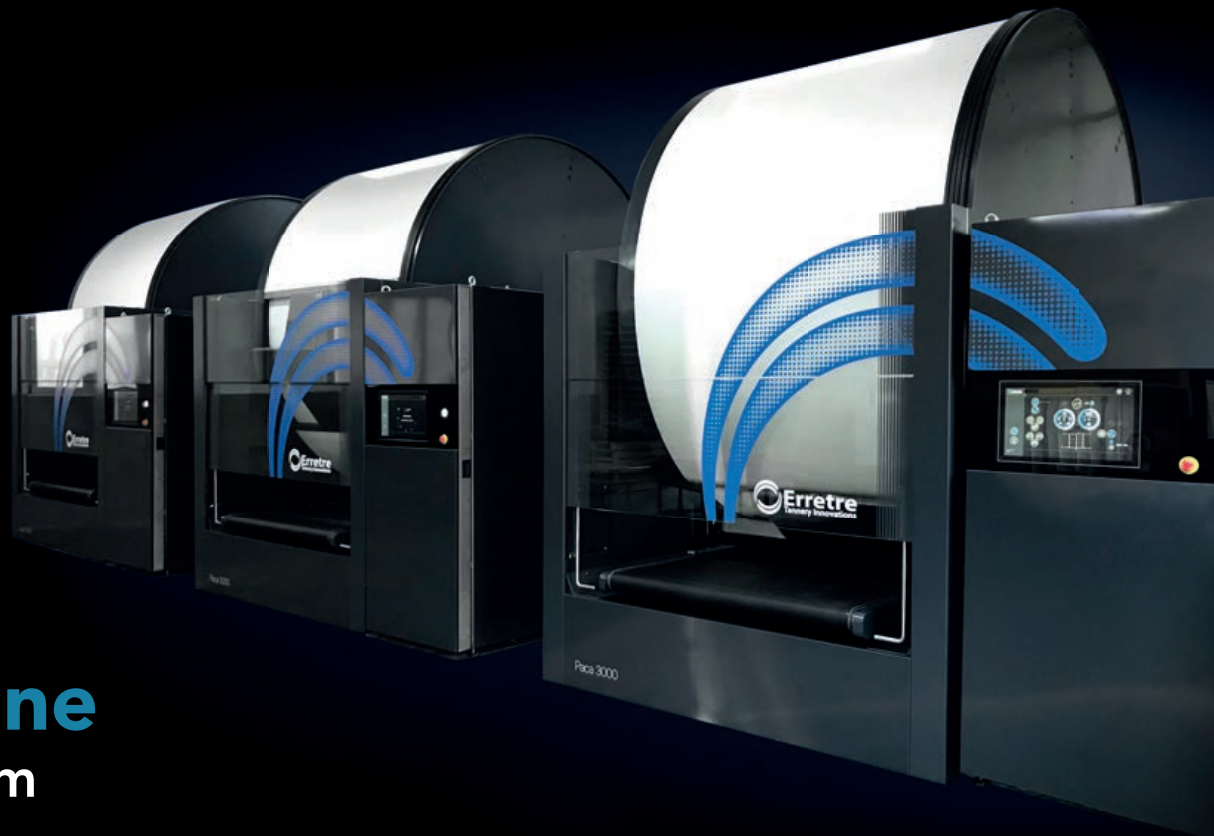
+20%
dust
extraction



+15%
milling
efficiency



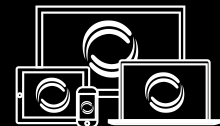
free to use
water on all
hides



Black Line Milling drum

Introducing **Black Line** the maximum of technological innovation, the future of tumbling is here.

Transparent safety gate and a curved shape belt conveyor allows easier and faster loading and unloading operation. Dedusting unit completely redesigned for a higher efficiency an time and energy savings.



**easy remote production
monitoring**

SCR/FTR SYSTEM

“a significant leap forward in beamhouse”

- Complete hair removal, damage free with zero nubuck effect on the grain.
- Cleaner cross sections than classical hair burn and hair save methods.
- Improved neck opening with minimization of wrinkles.
- More homogeneous dyeing with less dark shading on wrinkles.
- Additional liming effect that creates extra bonds on all tanning processes and tanning types whether chrome, vegetal or wet white.
- Clean, high quality splits that increase yields of high efficiency gelatin used in food and pharmaceutical industries.
- A fundamental system, easy to manage and operate by all tannery workers.



- clean and smooth grain
- high tear and tensile strength
- low fogging value
- low BOD and COD values



Complying to:

ZDHC MRSL v2.0

Certified to: ISO 9001 : 2015
ISO 14001 : 2015
ISO 45001 : 2018



DEBAĞ KİMYA

continued progress in food production in Brazil will be a good way to feed the world as the population continues to rise. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has been saying for a number of years that, if its estimates that the global population will grow to more than 9 billion people by 2050 are correct, global food production will have to increase by at least 60%¹.

Protein requirement

Brazil's contribution to meeting this target will include production of protein as well as grains, with beef playing a big part. Brazil's farmers and meat companies sent 29.7 million head of cattle to slaughter in 2020. This represented a decline of 8.5% compared to 2019, but this fall came after three straight years of growth. Increases in cattle farming have caused concern among campaign groups because they link it to illegal deforestation in sensitive regions such as the Amazon biome (a biome is a distinct biological community) and, in the centre of the country, the Cerrado savanna. Sometimes land is illegally cleared by fire to turn it into grazing for cattle. In other cases, farmers grow cereals on the cleared land and the cereals are used to feed cattle.

Trase Insights, an information resource on agricultural commodity supply chains that the Stockholm Environment Institute and campaign group Global Canopy set up together, states: "The expansion of cattle pasture and soy cropland are the main drivers of deforestation." And it says that deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon increased by 220% between 2014 and 2019, with more than one million hectares lost in that time². This affects the leather industry and not just in the eyes of campaign groups. In 2019, VF Corporation said that its brands, including Timberland, would place no further orders for leather from Brazil³ until it received assurance that the leather supplied by tanners there "do not contribute to environmental harm in the country".

An FAO report called 'The state of the world's forests 2020' says that the rate of deforestation, globally, has decreased over the past three decades, but that between 2015 and 2020, deforestation led to the loss of an estimated 10 million hectares per year in all parts of the world. In total since 1990, it adds, an estimated 420 million hectares of forest have been lost through conversion to other land uses⁴. Agricultural expansion continues to be the main driver of deforestation, forest degradation and the associated loss of forest biodiversity, the report says. This agricultural expansion is primarily down to the cultivation of soya and oil palm, and to cattle ranching.

Lowest possible impact

Like their colleagues elsewhere, leather manufacturers in Brazil work hard to have the lowest environmental impact they can. Friboi, the meat division of JBS, sources cattle from most states of Brazil and uses hides from all regions of the country in its leather division, JBS Couros, which is the world's largest producer of leather. It already has in place a policy of buying directly from no supplier involved in deforestation in the Amazon and will extend this to suppliers of suppliers by 2025. The group aims to achieve overall zero deforestation across its global supply chain by 2035⁵.

Rival beef and leather manufacturing group Marfrig has pledged to have a "deforestation-free production chain" by 2030, investing \$100 million. One of its main objectives is to preserve biomes in different regions of Brazil, especially the Amazon biome⁶. It has launched a plan called Verde+, from the Portuguese word for green. Through this, it will aim to make sure that 100% of its supply chain is sustainable and without connections to deforestation, it states.

Monitoring programme

If a decade and more sounds like a long time, the vast size of Brazil and the remoteness of some of the sites that are at the core of the problem are the explanation. For the last 10 years, JBS has been monitoring all the farmers who supply it with cattle. It uses satellite imagery, geo-referenced maps and data from government entities to do this. Any supplier that fails to stick to its code of practice is banned from supplying cattle to JBS and, 11,000 cattle-supplying farms have been blocked. Its policy on responsible raw material procurement covers more than a million square-kilometres in the Amazon. Its monitoring programme includes daily, online analysis of 60,000 cattle-supplying farms and it wants to use blockchain technology to monitor the suppliers of its suppliers. To this end, it launched a new platform called 'Transparent Livestock Farming' in April 2021.

In September 2020, the group formalised these ideas in a programme called Together for the Amazon, describing it as a series of "innovative, long-term initiatives that build on the company's legacy of conservation and sustainable development in the Amazon biome"⁷. It intends to work closely with industry leaders, civil society, government authorities and environmental stakeholders to propose "meaningful actions that will strengthen the value chain and help preserve this critical biome".

Four pillars

Together for the Amazon has four pillars: development of the value chain; forest conservation and restoration; support for local communities; and scientific research and technology development. As part of pillar number two, JBS has said it will share its supplier monitoring technology with livestock producers, smaller-scale farmers, financial institutions and the agribusiness sector.

On launching the programme, it created a new Fund For The Amazon to finance sustainable development projects there. As is the case with Marfrig's programme, this will involve an investment of nearly \$200 million by 2030.

Initiatives in other parts of Brazil that JBS is involved in include Rebanho Araguaia⁸ that aims to foster sustainable cattle farming in Mato Grosso. So far, 13 farms there have signed up to be part of the initiative and the group and its partners expect others to join them soon. All of the cattle farms involved are committed to increasing productivity in sustainable ways and this will include the recovery of degraded pasture lands, the adoption of crop-livestock integration models and the conservation and restoration of forest areas.

Productivity increase

Traditionally Brazil has had a lower rate of productivity in beef production than the US or the European Union and work has been

going on for some time to increase production there, to increase the availability of meat, especially for export markets. The authorities in Brazil want to achieve this while making land available for other activities. A sustainable cattle ranching management firm in Brazil has said the South American country's entire cattle herd could be accommodated on half of the available pasture land, making it "perfectly possible" for the cattle industry to cause no further deforestation in Amazon regions. The company concerned is Pecuária Sustentável da Amazônia (Pecsa), founded in Alta Floresta in Mato Grosso state in 2015 with the self-assigned mission of transforming cattle ranching in the Amazon into a sustainable business.

A good example of how technology and capacity building can bring improvements is a project called Low Carbon Integrated Livestock Farming, developed by campaign group ICV in partnership with JBS, Embrapa and the International Institute for Sustainability. This, too, focused on the state of Mato Grosso. This area was selected because it has one of the largest cattle herds in the country and is located in the Amazon biome. The initiative began in 2012 and, on some of the farms that took part, the improvement was greater than 100%. Similar initiatives have also taken place in states such as Rondônia, Pará, Bahia and Mato Grosso do Sul.

Still in Mato Grosso do Sul, a project called Novilho Precoce ('Early Yearling') offers another example of improvement. This programme has already been running for more than 20 years, combining quality, fair working conditions, conservation, phytosanitary control and animal welfare. Its aim is to help around 3,000 livestock farmers in Mato Grosso do Sul to produce 400,000 high-quality, early yearlings every year while keeping to all environmental and social requirements⁹. It aims to produce bulls weighing a minimum of 225 kilos and cows weighing at least 180 kilos.

Stakeholders work together

The best projects have one characteristic in common: they are multi-stakeholder-driven and bring together an extensive array of organisations, including slaughterhouses, producer associations (small, family-run farms and big industrial properties), finance bodies, NGOs and public agencies. The lesson the industry has learned is that a broader support base allows more in-depth knowledge to be applied to the development of the entire sector and ensures that different interests are balanced in the process.

The Brazilian Roundtable on Sustainable Livestock (GTPS) is a hands-on model that can clearly illustrate that a multi-stakeholder approach can be very effective and bring interesting results in the development of a sustainable livestock industry. Probably the first roundtable on sustainable livestock in the world, it has more than 60 members. The group has not only created a platform for promoting successful case studies related to sustainability, but has also become a meeting point where projects can be discussed and synergies developed. Furthermore, it has attracted international attention and support from international funds for the development of projects. It is currently involved in seven projects in five different Brazilian states, involving 800 producers and 800,000 hectares of land. It describes itself as having "intensified the fight against deforestation since 2018".

Movement for improvement

The intention of this essay is not to pretend that livestock production and the use of its by-products to make leather have no impact on the environment or that all claims of links to deforestation, greenhouse gas emissions and poor working conditions are false. Instead, it aims to show that important producers and different stakeholders are aware of the importance of developing the sector in a sustainable way and have been working for years now to achieve this aim. Furthermore, it is clear that the necessary technology and know-how are already in use and have already proved effective. Livestock farming can and must become even more sustainable, and to achieve sustainability on a widespread basis, it has to receive support from governments, financial institutions, international organisations and the market.

Transparency has become a priority for companies and consumers. Tools are available to support decisions, and there are many ways to assess suppliers and verify their compliance with legislation, public commitments and customer requirements. The support of the market is necessary to ensure that companies working towards best practice are recognised and encouraged, while those who fail to meet what is required by the market will fade away and lose their place.

What is not helpful to sustainable development in areas such as the Amazon biome is for campaign groups and companies to call for a boycott of leather from the entire country of Brazil to avoid any kind of association with existing problems. What they must do is demand higher standards and use the available tools (or even help to develop new ones) to ensure that their suppliers are working in keeping with best practice and taking part in a movement for improvement. It is important to engage in a constructive debate and foster initiatives that generate results. 🌱

References

1. <http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/icn2/toolkit/hunger-facts/en/>
2. <https://insights.trase.earth/yearbook/highlights/expansion-and-deforestation/>
3. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-brazil-environment-idUSKCN1VJ1I2>
4. <http://www.fao.org/state-of-forests/en/>
5. <https://jbs.com.br/en/press/jbs-makes-global-commitment-to-achieve-net-zero-greenhouse-gas-emissions-by-2040/>
6. <https://leatherbiz.com/News/155152>
7. <https://jbs.com.br/en/press/releases-en/jbs-announces-together-for-the-amazon-program/>
8. <https://jbs.com.br/en/jbs-news-en/friboi-and-the-araguaia-league-are-developing-a-sustainable-livestock-farming-program-in-mato-grosso-state/>
9. <https://www.semagro.ms.gov.br/proape/novilhos-de-qualidade/projeto-novilho-precoce/>

ATTIVA

LATEST GENERATION BELT BUFFING MACHINE.
FAST AND SIMPLE CHANGE OF BUFFING BELT AND RUBBER ROLLER.
LEATHER-SPREADING FEEDING CONVEYOR FOR SOFT LEATHERS.
TOUCH-SCREEN CONTROL PANEL WITH INTEGRATED MONITOR AND
CONTROL CAMERA ON EXIT CONVEYOR.

THINK GREEN

 **BERGI®**



 **BERtech**

Bertech and Bergi 50° are trademarks of Bergi S.p.a.

 **BERGI®**
1965 2016

[/ www.bergi.com](http://www.bergi.com) / info@bergi.com / (+39) 0444 473473


assomac


CONFINDUSTRIA
Associazione Industriali
della Provincia di Vicenza



Precision welding creates the continuous band from strips of cold rolled steel.
CREDIT: LAMEBO

Maximising precision and minimising waste in splitting

Italian band knife manufacturer Lamebo, established in Turin in 1969, makes splitting knives for many different industries, including tanneries and leather goods manufacturers. Leather splitting requires maximum precision and attention to be paid to all the processes involved in its manufacture. The rectified splitting band knife plays an important role and can make all the difference. It is very important not to confuse brushed blades with rectified blades, as it is very difficult to identify the difference for the end user. A brushed blade does not produce the same benefits, but only a blade manufacturer can immediately see the difference between the two.

Essentially unchanged since its introduction in the 1800s, the working of the band knife splitting machine is simple in its explanation, that of splitting through the full cross-sectional thickness of the hide or skin. In practice, however, the operation is less simplistic and an often-overlooked aspect of this is the blade itself. When talking about rectification of the surfaces of the knives, this means a levelling treatment aimed at guaranteeing the same uniform thickness on the full circumference, along the length of the blade, coupled with smooth surfaces, and with an extremely low degree of roughness. At the same time, with regards rectification of the edges, this relates to the turning of the edges of the blade aimed at eliminating or very much reducing the oscillation of the blade when running. These two areas of rectification, that together combine stricter tolerances in width, thickness and running accuracy, generate several positive results:

- **Maximum precision in the splitting** – modern splitting machines are able to work to very fine tolerances, with some machinery manufacturers claiming one tenth of a millimetre.
- **Increase in the number of pieces split** – with a smooth surface and constant thicknesses the blade passes through the material more easily and quickly.
- **Waste material** – precise splitting results in reduced waste as the operation can be done “right first time”.
- **Longer life of the blade and consequently fewer blade changes** – whilst cost of the consumable materials may not be a major cost, the down time associated with replacement is. By reducing the frequency of changeovers, costs can be reduced.
- **Lower consumption of grinding stones** – if the blade runs perfectly, the use of the grinding stones decreases, consuming them at a slower rate. Conversely, if the blade



does not run straight, the photocell detects the movement and 'calls' the blade to the grinding stones more frequently.

- **Quicker blade change and setting up of the machine** – with its precise and constant thickness, the final set up of the machine, such as aligning the pushers and gapping the jaw plates, is made easier.
- **Wear and tear on other parts of the splitting machine** – considering other aspects such as reduced grinding, fewer splitting passes, and a more accurate set up, the other parts of the machine that include drive motors, bearings and rollers all stand to benefit from reduced use and wear and tear.

Importantly, the pre-sharpening of the bevel plays a relevant role in terms of saving time, as it reduces the time taken for the setup and the first sharpening procedure. In terms of blade consumption, it reduces the risk of working the first bevel too fast causing overheating of the blade and



Lamebo's workshop near Turin manufactures continuous band knives for use on any make of splitting machine. CREDIT: LAMEBO

consequently wasting of the blade, and in terms of saving costs and quality, the better the sharpening edge, the better is the splitting performance and consequently the lower waste of leather.

Clearly, a precision blade allows the tanner to achieve high splitting performances with a substantial savings of time and cost that, especially in the current climate, should not be ignored. 🌱



Transparency just got visible!

SLF introduces a fresh approach for a sustainable leather industry!

Launching on Wednesday 19th May 2021

Scan the QR code to register for the launch event

www.sustainableleatherfoundation.com



Innovative and green: a new roller coat finishing machine

As the requirements of the natural eco-system continue to make their way to the top of the business agenda, the world of the tanner has come under scrutiny and is feeling its impact. As a result, research and development facilities increasingly focus on cleaner and greener answers to meet the challenge. Not surprisingly, the R&D activities of Gemata are focused on projects for new machinery with improved technical performance and less impact on the environment. With thirty years of experience as a leader in the leather finishing sector, a thorough analysis of its machinery portfolio, combined with the demands of its tannery partners and a study about its environmental performance, has led its design process and the introduction of the GREENSTAR-s.

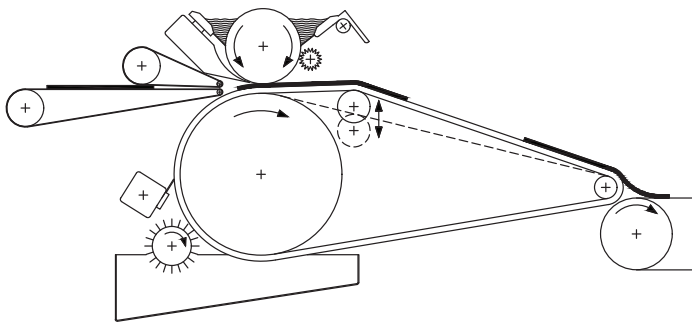
The Greenstar-s, with both syncro and reverse capabilities, is a versatile roller coat machine for all types of leather. Cowhide shoe upper or very light clothing sheepskins, as thin as 0.4mm, are well catered for, as too are automotive leathers. Precision of the application and covering power are claimed to be guaranteed even on the most defective of leathers and those with high thickness variations. The newly designed machine eliminates the

contamination of the flesh side as removal can be made without the need for a transfer conveyor, with further design improvements allowing for streak-free finishing as the machine is vibrationless. The improved leather detachment process is possible as a result of the innovative geometry of the machine, which is composed of a motorised rubber belt, a large diameter chromed roller and a return roller conveyor with a smaller diameter that facilitates detachment and the



Universal rollercoater can be used in conjunction with the Greenfinish paper release system or as a standalone machine.

ALL CREDITS: GREENSTAR



Machine configuration showing the large diameter feed roller with the conveyor belt positioning roller allowing four different feed out positions.

deposit of the leather exiting the machine. The special rubber conveyor belt can be positioned in any one of four different angles for the finishing of all types of leathers, ensuring a better application of the chemical product, an increased accuracy in the coating area and thus the finishing quality. In addition, to prevent the conveyor belt from deforming or losing its shape due to the change of angle, a system has also been patented that keeps the tension of the conveyor belt constant in all its different positions, extending its durability and reliability over time.

The Greenstar-s introduces an original movement of the doctor blade: from an arc geometry as seen on previous models, to a horizontal and calibrated movement system, keeping the roller flow rate controlled. It ensures a uniform and constant coverage with a positioning that automatically compensates the doctor blade consumption. The large, chromed steel, contrast roller guarantees uniform coverage and is equipped with a scraper, also in steel, which avoids the accumulation of dirt on the surface of the roller. This ensures that neither the chromed roller nor the internal face of the conveyor belt can be contaminated with residues that may damage the quality of the coating and it additionally allows easier, quicker, and more accurate cleaning operations.

From an ergonomic point of view, the new machine has been equipped with a more intuitive and simple blade adjustment system while the conveyor belt of the introduction spreader has been lowered and slightly inclined to maintain the height of the operator's work surface.

In the standard version, the use of long-life cylinders, available in several dozen different engraving types and capacity, help and optimise the product discharge from the engraving surface, making application much more uniform. It facilitates post application cleaning, which takes less than ten minutes and makes the colour change quicker. The Greenstar-s is seen as an upgrade to the company's Megastar-s model and it can also be used as part of the adhesive application stage in the Greenfinish release paper system, but more importantly, as a stand-alone machine for the application of stucco, foam finishes and many more base and pre-base formulations including hot waxes and impregnation resins. Available in four standard working widths, starting at 1300mm for small skins up to 2400mm for sides, the machine can apply between 2.5–40 grammes per square foot of finishing product, depending on finish viscosity and leather type and quality. ☼

PERFECT LEATHER

SUPPORTING YOU
SINCE 1868



LANGRO
FINISHING BY TRUMPLER



TRUMPLER
SIMPLY GOOD CHEMISTRY



Vacuum drying with low temperature drying on the table

When, in the middle of the covid-19 pandemic, the world slowed down, the Research and Development technicians at Officine di Cartigliano started working on a new tannery machine: the Fast & Furious3 Nero Vacuum Dryer. It is seen as another instance of the company's enthusiasm to innovate.

Vacuum drying came into popular usage in the 1960s. It was based on the principle of water evaporation at lower temperatures when under reduced atmospheric pressure or in a vacuum. At normal (sea level) atmospheric pressures of 760mm Hg, water boils at 100°C. By reducing the pressure, that boiling point also falls.

Leather, with its natural characteristics, such as touch and roundness, became the main focus of a new challenge as drying the leather at a low temperature no longer simply refers to the temperature of the table. The required innovation, as Cartigliano's R&D people analysed it, was in keeping the skin itself at a low temperature. The company's new FF3 Nero Vacuum Dryer offers a revolution in range, because it allows water evaporation at very low temperatures – around 22°C – as a result of the speed increase of the vacuum circuit. Increasing the speed of evaporation and condensation of water prevents leather from exceeding 32-34°C during drying.

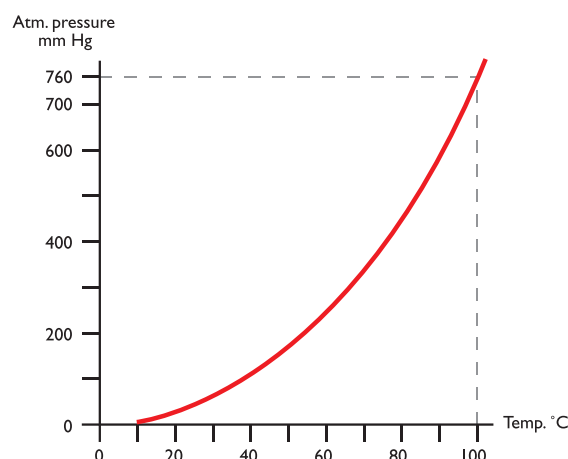
Lower leather temperature means improved yield and quality with minimum area loss. The aesthetic characteristics of the product are also enhanced and improved overall, especially where critical issues can be found due to product quality problems caused by previous processes.

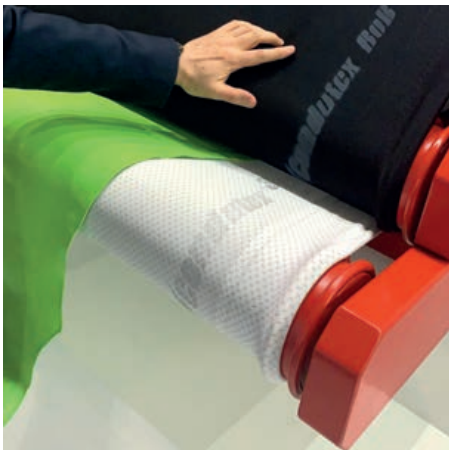
With regards to sustainability, the new vacuum dryer guarantees low specific consumption because of the high efficiency of the vacuum system. Through the realisation of a new and more compact vacuum circuit, incorporating through feed lateral condensers, Cartigliano has accomplished higher efficiencies that allow for higher rates of condensate suction from the drying leather. Being a water-

based system, no oil is required for the internal cooling operations and therefore there are no polluting substance emissions to the atmosphere — just water vapour.

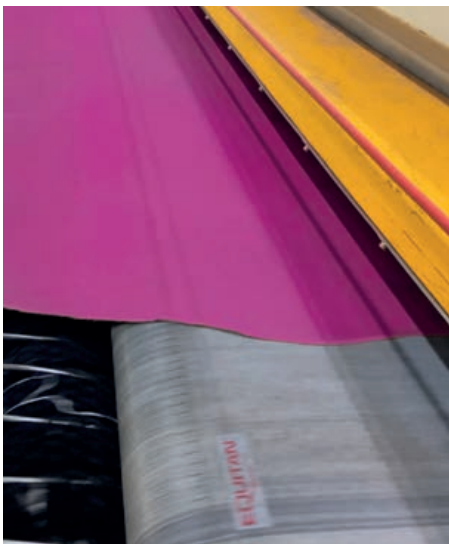
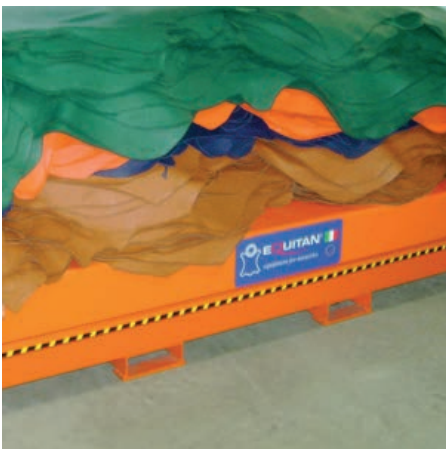
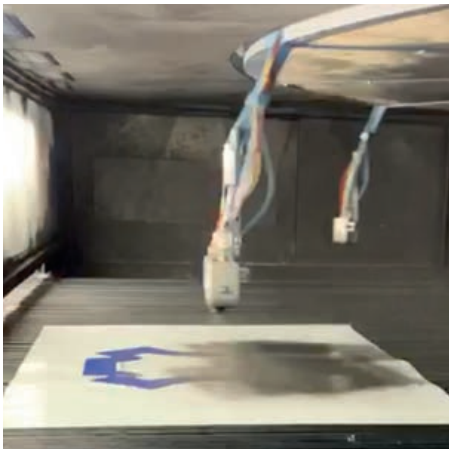
As with all Cartigliano machines, the FF3 Nero can be customised to meet individual customer needs. The standard machine is made with up to six tables, with two being the minimum but a fully customised version has been made with eight. For the tables themselves, options are also available in the form of the traditional mirror plate finish; alternatively, customers can opt for a semi matt or a sand blast finish, offering different aesthetics to the dried leather. 🌐

Table 1. Boiling point of water at varying atmospheric pressure





*... We will continue
in our effort to improve,
as we are convinced that
Quality,
Performance
and
Customer Care
will always
be rewarded!*



Part One: COD – What is Chemical Oxygen Demand?

**Dr Jeffry Guthrie-Strachan, Stephen Trantum,
and Ulrich Buckenmayer – Trumpler**

We have all heard of COD but how many of us really know what it is, or what it means?

Trumpler has undertaken a five-year long investigation into the role that COD plays in its products, how COD can be used to express the exhaustion of the products, and whether or not the effluent COD of a dyehouse recipe can be predicted using data accumulated from the project. The results of the study will be outlined in Part 2 of this report in a following issue of World Leather but first we need to understand what COD represents, its importance and how and why it is measured.

To start, COD is an acronym for Chemical Oxygen Demand. The COD and solids content of sewage and trade effluents are two of the most important parameters used to calculate effluent treatment costs for tanneries.

When looking at industrial and tannery effluents, there are a number of parameters that are commonly measured, e.g., chromium, chloride, sulfide, sulfate, TKN (total Kjeldahl nitrogen), total dissolved solids (TDS), biochemical oxygen demand (BOD), and chemical oxygen demand (COD). Some of the analyses are a direct measurement of the pollutant under investigation, e.g., chromium, chloride, sulfide, and sulfate; others represent a collection of many pollutants and are not specific, such as TKN, TDS, BOD and COD. [Table 1]

Chemical oxygen demand or COD is a relatively convenient, reproducible, and affordable way to represent the organic pollutant load of an effluent.

What are organic pollutants?

Organic compounds are chemicals composed of carbon² [Box 1]. There are millions of different chemical compounds that contain carbon and this is why organic chemistry is so important in its own right. Any organic compound that contaminates a water or soil sample is an organic pollutant.

Why is it important to measure organic pollutants (COD) in effluents?

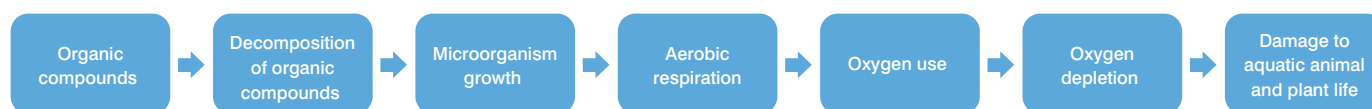
When organic pollutants are toxic, they will kill fish and aquatic plant life and microorganisms, thereby directly damaging ecosystems and the environment. Organic tannery pollutants are generally non-toxic and are, conversely, a rich

Table 1: Common effluent pollutants and analyses¹

Effluent Analysis	Specific or General	What does the analysis represent?	Why is it measured?
Chromium(III) and chromium(VI)	Specific	The amount of chromium present as Cr(III) and/or Cr(VI)	May form chromium(VI)
Chloride	Specific	The amount of salt (sodium chloride) present in an effluent	Increased salinity results in unpotable water and cannot be used for crop irrigation
Sulfide	Specific	The amount of sodium sulfide in an effluent	Forms toxic hydrogen sulfide gas upon acidification
Sulfate	Specific	The amount of sodium sulfate in an effluent	May form toxic hydrogen sulfide gas under anaerobic conditions
TKN	Specific/General	Represents nitrogen-based pollutants like ammonia, ammonium ions and/or organic nitrogen in an effluent	May cause eutrophication of natural waters
TDS	General	Represents the amount of dissolved organic and inorganic solids in an effluent	May cause the blockage of effluent pipes and drains
BOD	General	A representation of the biodegradable organic and nitrogen components of an effluent (usually in 5 days - BOD ₅)	May cause microbial activity to increase in natural waters and create an oxygen starved aqueous environment with associated environmental damage
COD	General	A representation of the organic component of an effluent	May create an oxygen starved aqueous environment with associated environmental damage



Figure 1

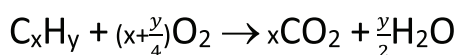


source of food for aquatic microorganisms. Herein lies an additional, indirect problem.

When aquatic microorganisms “eat” organic compounds, they use oxygen dissolved in the water in a process called aerobic respiration. If there is a significant amount of organic food (pollutants) present in the water, the microorganisms require a significant amount of dissolved oxygen to “digest” the food. Natural waters contain very small amounts of dissolved oxygen, only about 10 milligrams per litre of water³, and this natural source of dissolved oxygen is easily and rapidly exhausted. Organic pollutants can thereby, indirectly, cause oxygen starvation in natural waters, which has an obvious negative impact on fish and other aquatic fauna and flora, as represented in *Figure 1*.

Where did the COD method of measuring organic pollutants come from?

When organic substances degrade and are consumed by microorganisms, oxygen is utilised in the process and the organic compounds are described as possessing an oxygen demand. This oxygen demand can be summarised using a chemical reaction for the decomposition of a simple organic hydrocarbon compound into carbon dioxide and water:



Organic compound + oxygen → carbon dioxide + water

This equation shows that if we can measure the amount of oxygen consumed when organic compounds decompose, we can use this value to represent how much organic compound was present at the beginning. Oxygen demand is usually expressed as milligrams of oxygen consumed (required) per litre of effluent (mg O₂/L).

BOD₅ is also an oxygen demand known as biochemical oxygen demand. BOD₅ measures the amount of oxygen consumed by microorganisms as they degrade an effluent sample over 5 days. The oxygen content of the original effluent sample is measured at the start of the analysis and then the remaining oxygen content is measured after 5 days. The difference represents the oxygen consumed biochemically by microorganisms over the period and is expressed in terms of milligrams of oxygen consumed per litre of effluent³.

BOD₅ takes 5 days to complete, is not always consistent

Box 1 Organic Compounds²

Organic compounds are substances composed of carbon, excluding (i) the elemental forms of carbon, such as graphite and diamond, (ii) the oxides of carbon, such as carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide, (iii) carbonates such as sodium carbonate, and (iv) cyanides such as sodium cyanide.

Examples of COD-active organic compounds include natural fats and oils, proteins such as collagen, keratin and proteoglycans, carbohydrates (sugars), syntans, vegetable tannins, mineral oils, polymers, organic acids such as formic and lactic acid, glutaraldehyde and dyestuffs.

and can be unreliable. For this reason, chemists wanted to find a process that was faster, more reliable, consistent and affordable. They looked to chemicals that are known to react by providing a chemical source of oxygen, e.g., potassium permanganate and potassium dichromate. This approach was referred to as a chemical oxygen demand.

Potassium permanganate was used in early chemical oxygen demand methods and was referred to as “oxygen absorbed” (OA), “oxygen consumed” or “permanganate value” (PV)³. The results are not consistent and the method is seldom used today.

The standard chemical oxygen demand method used today utilises potassium dichromate as the chemical source of oxygen and fulfils almost all the requirements for expressing organic pollutant contents of effluents.

How good is the potassium dichromate chemical oxygen demand method for determining organic pollutants in effluents?³

The majority of common organic compounds react completely when heated with an excess of potassium dichromate, making the method reliable and consistent (to ensure an excess of potassium dichromate a back titration is used [Box 2]).

Unfortunately, potassium dichromate also reacts with some oxidisable compounds that are not organic in nature and we must be aware of these interferences and errors if the COD measured is expected to represent the organic content of an effluent. There are a number of inorganic compounds that can react with potassium dichromate but only a limited number that are commonly encountered in natural waters and industrial effluent streams, namely, chloride, ferrous,

Table 2: Potassium dichromate COD interferences

Interference	Elimination	Checks/Corrections
Chloride	Addition of mercuric sulfate to the analysis	Samples should be checked to ensure the amount of mercuric sulfate added is sufficient for high levels of chloride
Sulfide	None	The sulfide content of an effluent should be measured and a corrected value subtracted from the COD content to ensure that the COD reflects only the organic pollutants

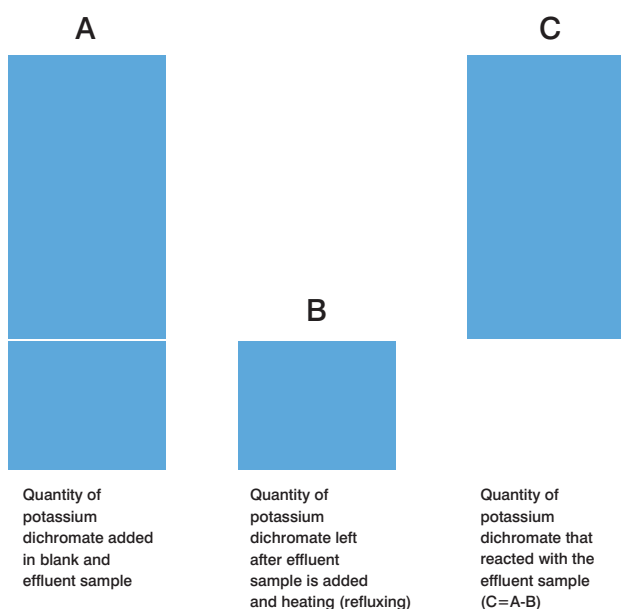


Box 2 Potassium dichromate COD Back Titration³

A standard procedure to measure COD is described in the following.

A fixed amount of potassium dichromate is added to two flasks, respectively. Effluent sample is added to one flask only and distilled water to the other as a blank/reference. Care must be taken to ensure that the effluent sample added is small enough (or dilute enough) that it does not react with all of the potassium dichromate present to ensure that the potassium dichromate is in excess*.

Both samples are then heated (refluxed) for about two hours to encourage complete reaction of the potassium dichromate with the effluent sample. The amount of potassium dichromate present is then measured by titration and calculated for the distilled water blank/reference (A) and for the effluent sample (B). The amount of potassium dichromate that reacts with the effluent sample (C) is calculated by subtracting the effluent sample potassium dichromate result from the blank/reference ($C=A-B$). The amount of potassium dichromate that reacts (C) is then converted to a theoretical amount of oxygen provided to the sample. The analysis takes 5-8 hours to complete.



**Potassium dichromate is bright orange but when it reacts with organic compounds it changes to a green colour. To ensure that the potassium dichromate is in excess and for the back titration to work, the effluent sample must retain some orange colour after heating and cannot be completely green. If the sample goes green, the analysis needs to be repeated with a smaller effluent sample*

sulfide and nitrite ions. Nitrite and ferrous ions are not expected in tannery effluents, but precautions need to be exercised for chlorides and sulfides, as these pollutants are significant in selected effluent streams, e.g., sulfides in liming liquors and chlorides in soaking and pickle liquors. Sulfide and chloride ions react and are oxidised by potassium dichromate and give false positive results for organic pollutants [Table 2].

Why is COD so important?

The COD and solids content of sewage and industrial effluents are two of the most important parameters used to calculate effluent treatment costs as illustrated by the Mogden Formula.⁴ [Box 3] Many governments may also impose strict regulations on the COD levels of effluents discharged by factories.

Box 3 The Mogden Formula⁴

The Mogden formula, named after a sewage treatment plant in west London, UK, is commonly used as a basis to calculate the pricing of industrial effluent treatment. There are two effluent parameters used in the pricing for COD and suspended solids.

COD gives a reliable, accurate, consistent, convenient and relatively inexpensive representation of the overall polluting power of an effluent and therefore also provides an indication of how difficult or expensive it will be to treat the effluent.

The ratio of BOD_5 to COD values can be used to investigate the viability of biological treatments to treat an effluent. BOD_5 represents the biodegradable component of the oxygen demand and COD represents the maximum oxygen demand.

A BOD_5 /COD ratio of 1 would indicate that a biological effluent plant could be used to eliminate all of the COD in 5 days. A BOD_5 /COD ratio of 0 indicates that the organic components are not biodegradable at all. Tannery effluents will vary depending on the raw materials, processing methods and chemicals but will commonly have a BOD_5 /COD ratio between 0.3-0.5.⁵

It is useful to note that biological effluent plants reduce aqueous COD by converting the organic material into biomass which increases the solid content of an effluent, hence effluent COD goes down but the effluent solids content also goes up.

Additional Oxygen Demands

Organic compounds commonly contain the elements carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen. The potassium dichromate COD method accounts for the oxygen demand for carbon and hydrogen, but it does not measure the oxygen demand from nitrogen. To calculate a theoretical nitrogen oxygen demand, the TKN of an effluent (in mg/L) is frequently multiplied by a factor (usually 5) and added to the potassium dichromate COD to provide a total COD³.

Total Organic Oxygen Demand

$$= \text{COD}_{\text{carbon}} + \text{COD}_{\text{hydrogen}} + \text{COD}_{\text{oxygen}} + \text{COD}_{\text{nitrogen}}$$

$$= \text{COD}_{\text{potassium dichromate}} + 5 \times \text{TKN}$$

Conclusions

COD is a direct measure of the amount of matter in an effluent that reacts (is oxidised) with potassium dichromate.

COD is a representation of the maximum amount of oxygen that may be required to neutralise the oxidisable pollutants in an effluent.

COD is commonly utilised to represent the amount of organic pollutants in an effluent.

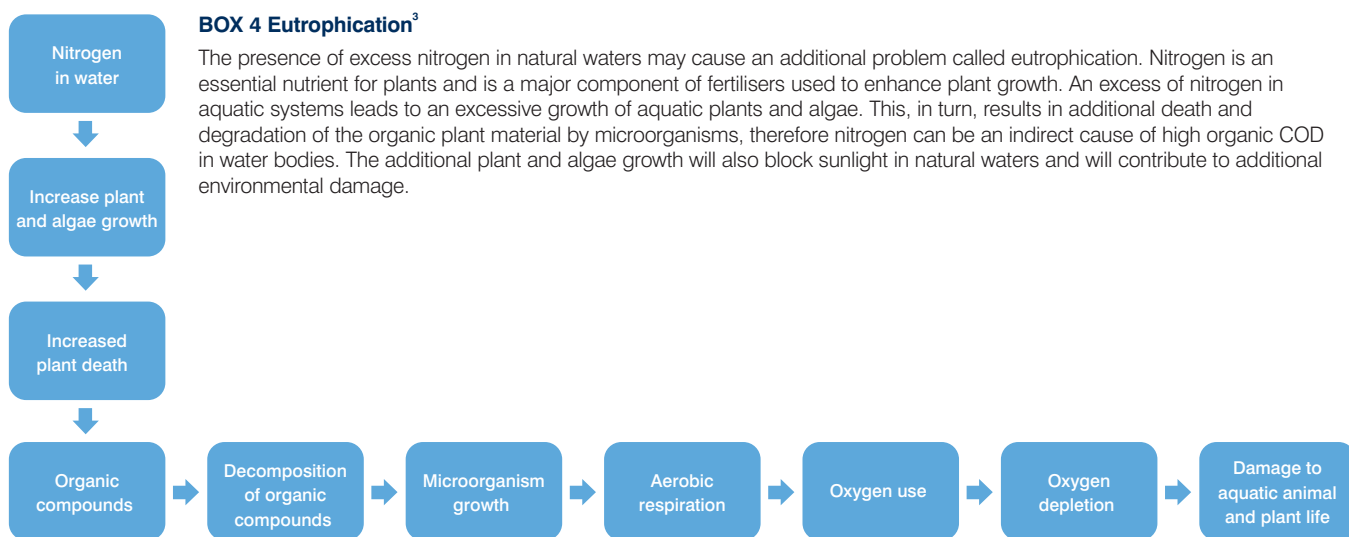
COD is a reliable, reproducible, fast, convenient and affordable analytical technique.

COD is a good indicator of the overall polluting power of an effluent and is therefore an extremely important parameter in wastewater analysis and effluent treatment processes.



BOX 4 Eutrophication³

The presence of excess nitrogen in natural waters may cause an additional problem called eutrophication. Nitrogen is an essential nutrient for plants and is a major component of fertilisers used to enhance plant growth. An excess of nitrogen in aquatic systems leads to an excessive growth of aquatic plants and algae. This, in turn, results in additional death and degradation of the organic plant material by microorganisms, therefore nitrogen can be an indirect cause of high organic COD in water bodies. The additional plant and algae growth will also block sunlight in natural waters and will contribute to additional environmental damage.



References

1. *The Framework for Leather Manufacture, Volume III*, World Trades Publishing Limited, 2013.
2. The American Chemical Society, www.acs.org, accessed March 2021.
3. *Standard Method for the Examination of Water and*

Sewage, American Public Health Association, 2017.

4. Stephen Merrett, *The Price of Water: Studies in Water Resource Economics and Management*, London, 2005.

5. *Best Available Techniques Reference Document for the Tanning of Hides and Skins*, Industrial Emissions Directive 2010/75/EU, 2013.

**100%
CONFIDENT**

HARDY

IN OUR PEOPLE AND OUR PRODUCTS
AND WE'RE SAFELY OPEN FOR BUSINESS!

**IT'S THE
HARDY WAY.**

SHAVING BLADES FLESHING BLADES GRINDING WHEELS COPPER CAULKING hardy.uk.com



United Chemicals

New Generation of **Leather**



Polysol - Polymeric degreasing and wetting agents

ProWhite - Polymer tanning for chrome-free and metal-free leathers

Polysoft - Polymeric fatliquoring range

Polytan - Polymeric retanning chemicals

5004 Sk. No: 23 ALOSBI 35800 Aliaga - IZMIR / TURKEY Tel: +90 232 621 50 Fax: +90 232 621 50 67
info@unitedchemicals-co.com / www.unitedchemicals-co.com

 [united.chemicals](https://www.instagram.com/united.chemicals)



Detection of the tracer is performed with a simple handheld device – a green light denotes a positive result.

CREDIT: STARDUST MATERIALS

Taggants, traceability, and avoiding fraud

With a background in document security, supply chain traceability, and brand protection for the past 23 years, Stardust Materials, a research and development firm based in Vancouver, WA, although a large suburb of Portland, Oregon, has a non-destructive, innovative, and sustainable traceability solution that could interest the leather industry and help to avoid fraudulent claims.

From construction and building materials to food and beverages, Stardust Materials claims to offer a traceability solution with the 'lifetime of diamonds' and a detection system that is no more difficult to use than changing a television channel with a remote control. It offers brand owners the ability to authenticate products and materials at any point in their supply chain, from the point of origin to the end user. With respect to leather, the company thus far has concentrated mostly on apparel and footwear but it has more recently branched out to offer their solution to the tanners themselves. The company already works with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) as official experts on the topic of traceability and is a founding member of the Sustainable Leather Foundation (SLF).

World Leather spoke to Jose Gasque, Stardust Chief Operating Officer, to learn more about its tracing system based on taggant technology and how it would work on leather. A taggant can be defined as a unique signature of identity to which one can assign information.

To what extent does the technology penetrate the leather?

Stardust markers are small particles, approximately $1\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ in size, called taggants. Our taggants won't permeate the full thickness of the leather. They will mechanically bind in place to any microscopically rough surface areas, especially the porous surfaces in leather. The tracer particles become embedded in the fibres and *below the surface* of the hide, depending on the application method. [$1\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ equals 0.001mm]



Could the taggant be removed or rubbed off?

We've found that in applications where the marker is required to move through the supply chain, there is no incentive to remove the marker, and normal rubbing, wear, or handling will not make the marker come off.

How are taggants applied?

The simplest application method is to incorporate our markers into one of the many materials used in the finishing stage. But you could mark salted hides before they come to the tannery, and potentially to the wet blues at any point when you could add a dispersible powder.

What studies have been done to assess its stability during the leather making process?

The material itself is an inorganic ceramic; a very durable class of materials that are known for resistance to high heat and extreme chemical environments. For example, one of our projects required that we develop taggants that could survive a bath of sulfuric acid (H₂SO₄) at 90°C for several minutes. Which we were able to do. Our taggants are some of the most indestructible materials known to humankind.

What information is stored, how is the information embedded in the ceramic particles?

We get this question a lot. Stardust does not work like a data chip or barcode. There is no "silver bullet" solution for traceability, or more specifically, there is no digital-data dust that exists which would follow the product through the leather supply chain as Stardust does and give you unit level information that is programmable and readable with a cell phone. That sort of technology just doesn't exist. Our markers are the integrity in a supply chain. It acts as the foundation of veracity and traceability. It is the solid foundation to any inventory management. It's the connection to the physical goods that blockchain needs to make its digital duplicates. Because if there is no physical marker, all that data is disconnected from reality.

What interest have you had from the leather industry, not just tanners but also the broader pipeline.

We've had interest from tanners, their upstream suppliers, and brand owners. Our technology creates this link from the point of incorporation to any point downstream when detected with our authentication devices, even down to retail spaces. It ties the whole supply chain together and provides multiple benefits, which often vary among various stakeholders along the supply chain, from liability protection, anti-counterfeiting and providing avenues for brand owners to market product points of differences and quality enhancements that set their products apart, such as chromium vs chromium-free leather, etc.

What would you say are the advantages over the current physical/chemical traceability solutions being offered?

Stardust will last the life of the product. Our technology provides instant, in-field, non-destructive, and repeatable authentication that costs nothing more than the electricity to charge the hand-held detection device's battery. It gives you the ability to mark and check every square centimetre of a leather piece, even when cut into smaller pieces. Stardust taggants are invisible, so there is no change to the product's appearance. Plus, they do not affect the functionality of any additives through the process because they are chemically inert.

Can the Stardust product be tailored to individual customers – could multiple customers tag the same product giving sequential traceability?

Yes and no. We have the most extensive portfolio of inorganic taggants in the industry, developed over decades of R&D, and can offer unique materials to any clients that request unique materials. However, there are not an infinite number of taggants. We found that trying to use this technology as an individual, invisible barcode is not the most efficient or practical use of our technology – primarily due to the increased costs and complexity of the application. We connect the material to the claim and leave the inventory systems to others.

You say that the product has the lifetime of diamonds – could you expand a little here?

Our taggants are stable ceramic materials. Once created, Stardust taggants will retain their form and structure for an indefinite amount of time. Though it's true that eventually everything, including diamonds, will decay, this time scale is in the millions to billions of years. All-the-while, our taggants are non-toxic and safe to incorporate into children's toys, food packaging, and pharmaceutical applications.

Does the traceability work in a garment or shoe made with different elements or pieces from other manufacturers?

For items that come from several different locations, maybe even different suppliers, all those marked with Stardust will be traceable even as a single element of a larger piece. This is important because some brand owners make 100% claims.

Various manufacturers use sustainability claims to tell their story and promote their brands, while several organisations work on efforts to create sustainability standards and certifications. Stardust enables stakeholders to demonstratively communicate these sustainability standards and claims to their internal and external customers.

What is the cost involved with the taggants?

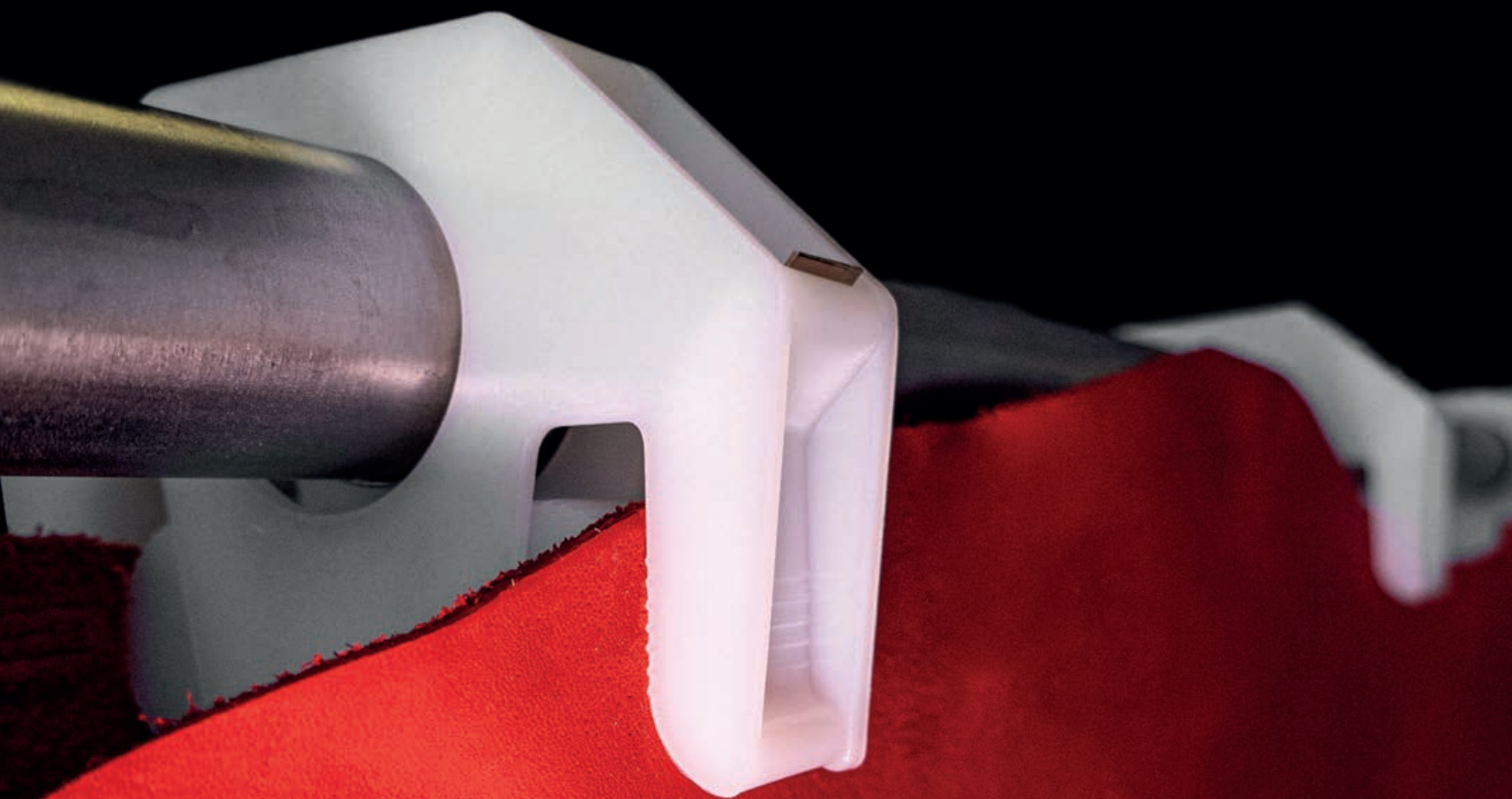
This is a complicated question because our business model is volume-based; larger volumes allow for more significant discounts. Costs are also dependent on the range of applications and the results and end goals a client wants to achieve. For example, internal forensic tests, in-field testing, dilution detection, or retail space engagement. There are several reasons why the highest volume and highest security applications use our technology for traceability. The low cost is one of those reasons. Stardust knows that if the traceability solution is not affordable, it's not a solution. That's serious business for us because we rely only on revenue for our operation, and affordability for our customers is key.

The lack of licensing fees and the inclusion of our in-field detection devices that enable unlimited, free testing certainly lowers the overall cost of delivering iron-clad supply chain traceability to our clients. Stardust is the least cost-prohibitive solution when the goal is to test every piece of leather, and if cost prohibits you from testing every piece of leather, what's the point of marking in the first place?

We often ask our prospective clients, "Do you want actual direct product traceability, or merely the perception of it?" [We believe] Stardust is the most cost-effective and least expensive direct product marking solution available. 🌐

MCC

Multiple
Cell
Conditioner



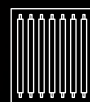
DRY AND CONDITION WITH MCC DIFFERENT LEATHER SIMULTANEOUSLY

Leather moisture has always been the key variable in leather making process. From today with MCC this variable is under control.

The cell handling system enables continuous processing using separate climate chambers. The contents are loaded into the next cell in one automatic movement, keeping the batch of leather processed in the same time separate from the others. MCC is independent of production variables and guarantees uniform treatment.



Constant repeatability
of results



Working system
independent cells



Optimised cycle
times



Moisture under
control



Cartigliano

FAST & FURIOUS³





DRYING IS OUR STRENGTH

Vacuum Dryer Models: a-CNS, CS, CS-S, Fast & Furious³, Vacking

cartigliano.com



Scan QR CODE
and connect
with us



Leather and the circular economy



Leather uses renewable raw materials



Waste from other sectors (meat and dairy) is the input for making leather



The material is long-lasting



Leather products are eminently repairable



Leather is in keeping with sustainable consumption and sustainable production and, thus, supports the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)



Use of leather aids the battle against marine pollution, also part of the SDGs



The leather industry opens up pathways into the circular economy for companies of all sizes, including many thousands of small and medium enterprises



Leather content fulfils finished product manufacturers' desire to use recycled material



Finished products made from leather will meet criteria for green tax relief and for green procurement exercises



Leather manufacturing supports green employment commitments

Leather's case for being part of the circular economy is clear.

Credit: WTP/Flaticon

Time to tell leather's circular story

Consumers from inside and outside the European Union (EU) have until June 9 to take part in a public consultation about sustainable products¹. Following its publication at the end of 2019 of a set of policy initiatives called The Green Deal and of a Circular Economy Action Plan in March 2020, the European Commission is now preparing to put in place a legislative proposal for making clearer what is and what is not a sustainable product.

The Commission wants the ways of working of product manufacturers who are "frontrunners" in sustainability to become the norm. It wants to make sure that, when people go to buy what they need, the products on offer are fit for an economy that is climate-neutral, resource-efficient and circular. It wants waste to reduce. It will seek to bring in legislation to make sure this happens and this initiative, which it calls the Sustainable Products Initiative (SPI), is a means of making sure that legislation is clear and fair.

The story so far

In its preparatory work on the launch of a major new policy or law, the Commission publishes a roadmap to describe the problem it wants to tackle and the objectives it wants to meet. Without going into too much detail, the roadmap provides an outline of policy options and invites feedback on that outline. For the SPI roadmap, this initial

The European Commission is pressing ahead with its plans to bring in official policies, and even legislation, to determine what is and what is not a sustainable product. A public consultation is under way, giving people across the industry a chance to state leather's case for inclusion.

feedback exercise ran from September to November 2020.

What happens next is that the Commission launches a fuller public consultation, with more precise questions to the stakeholders based on an evaluation of the replies the initial exercise brings in. This is the stage the SPI is at now. The Commission intends to have the SPI complete before the end of 2021.

As part of the consultation that is going on at the moment, all citizens and organisations are welcome to

contribute information and opinions that will help shape the SPI. The Commission has said suppliers, manufacturers (including small and medium enterprises, SMEs), technical experts, industry organisations, campaign groups and everyday consumers are among those for whom this may be of particular interest.

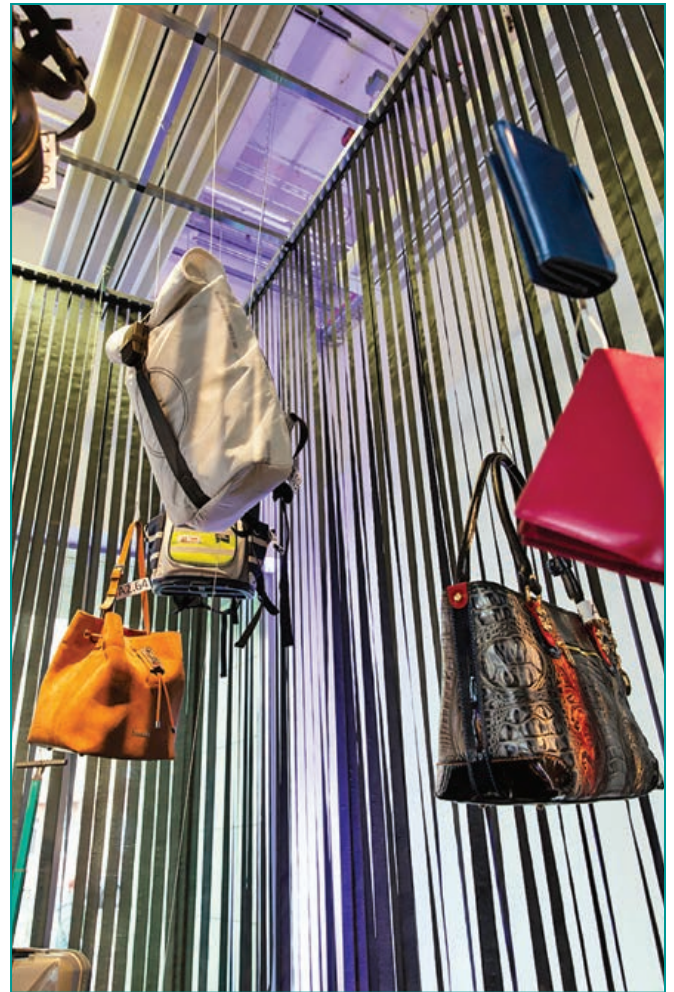
Trillion euro budget

Seeking answers to the question of what makes a product sustainable is part of the Green Deal and the Circular Economy Action Plan. The EU wants a recovery package that will help alleviate “the dramatic and unprecedented effects of the covid-19 crisis”, at the same time as investing in Europe’s longer-term sustainable future.

The EU intends to “mobilise” at least €1 trillion in investment (with money from public and private funding) to make its economy carbon-neutral by 2050. On the path towards that, it envisages spending tens of billions of euros in the decisive decade of the 2020s to help workers develop skills and competences for the job market of the future, and to help SMEs, start-ups and incubators to create new economic opportunities.

When it comes to the products companies manufacture and make available for consumers to buy, these new economic opportunities will need to contribute to keeping climate and environmental impacts “within planetary boundaries”. If the planet is unable to sustain what we want to make and buy, the implication is that we will no longer be allowed to make them or buy them. It seems difficult to articulate an argument against that.

With regard to manufactured goods, the SPI makes it clear that it is going to be necessary to reduce “the overall lifecycle climate and environmental footprint” of products for sale in



Clear criteria will help consumers make fair comparisons when choosing products based on sustainability credentials.

Credit: ILM Offenbach



Sustainable products have durability engineered into them and products made from leather, with high levels of craftsmanship and savoir-faire, are a prime example.

Credit: ILM Offenbach

the EU market. Part of this, it spells out, will be achieving longer product lifetimes through, for example, making items more durable and repairable, increasing their use of circular materials, reducing waste and achieving higher recycling rates. The EU envisages the investment of enormous sums of money to bring these objectives to fruition.

Growing demand

And, if feedback that e-commerce platform eBay offered upon seeing the roadmap for the SPI process is anything to go by, consumers are sincere about their desire for more of the products they buy to be sustainable. The company considers itself to be “a key player in the circular economy”.

According to eBay’s formal submission, the number of searches on its platform that specify a desire for products that are sustainable and environmentally friendly almost doubled between 2018 and 2019. It described demand for goods that are pre-owned, eco-designed and repairable as “ever-growing”.

Key principles

In the build-up to the launch of the roadmap, the representative body of the leather industry in the European Union, COTANCE, made a formal submission of its own to



say it wanted claims about product sustainability to be clear for consumers and to sow no confusion. It complained that the suppliers of alternative materials and of finished products made from those materials still misuse leather's name to try to put a gloss of naturalness and quality on what they offer. "They ought to be truthful," COTANCE said of these companies, adding that a lack of truthfulness is a barrier to "informed decision-making" on the part of consumers.

It called for an EU system to establish the key principles of what constitutes a sustainable product to protect consumers from being misled and equipping them to withstand marketing bluster and greenwashing so that they are able to make accurate comparisons between products.

Companies should be free to present their products as sustainable if they want to, COTANCE said. But if they choose to do so, they should present information that is conditioned by product environmental footprint category rules (PEFCR). "This would ensure that any green claims are valid," it said in its SPI feedback. COTANCE started work on PEFCR for leather in 2013 and won EU approval in 2018 for what it had developed. It has said that methods for communicating information "clearly and meaningfully" to consumers about leather's environmental footprint remain a work in progress.

Enhanced durability

French fashion industry body the Fédération de la Haute Couture et de la Mode also contributed formal feedback to the roadmap. It said that "enhancing durability" is one of the key elements of the eco-design of high-end products. Luxury accessories embrace "core notions of quality and long product lifetimes", the organisation said, as they are

The Commission wants the ways of working of product manufacturers who are "frontrunners" in sustainability to become the norm.

Credit: ILM Offenbach

made from high-quality materials with outstanding craftsmanship and savoir-faire.

"Luxury products can be repaired and restored," it said, "and often passed from one generation to another." Promoting durability should be part of the SPI, it said, as should design for disassembly or recyclability.

Stake a claim

We have said repeatedly in this section of *World Leather* that companies and individuals with an interest in the leather industry, and an interest in its future, need to shout about the contribution leather can make to the circular economy.

The leather industry deserves some of the funding that is on offer, but the money is not going to fall into the laps of tanners, finished leather product brands or industry bodies; the leather industry is going to have to make its case and stake its claim. The current SPI public consultation provides a good opportunity for people across the industry to make their voices heard. 🗣️

NOTES

1. <https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12567-Sustainable-products-initiative/public-consultation>



Since 1920, the tannin behind the world's finest leathers



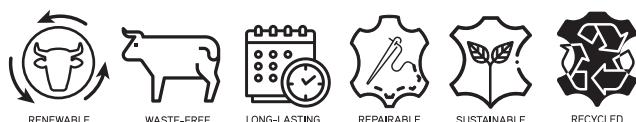
Natural, sustainable, and carbon neutral,
beautiful leather begins with **NTE Mimosa**.





The circular economy vision that has emerged from William McDonough's early work on Cradle To Cradle suggests that we must make less, buy less and consume less. If this is to work, the things we do buy and use need to be made from genuinely circular materials.

Material choices matter



Events company GreenBiz will run its Circularity conference from June 15-17. This will be third time it has run the event. Circularity 21 will be online only, as was Circularity 20, because of covid-19. The launch event, Circularity 19, took place in person in Minneapolis, billed as North America's first major conference on this subject.

In spite of the presence and ongoing participation of figures such as William McDonough, whom some have termed the father of circular-economy thinking, sustainable fashion champion Elizabeth Cline says she was left a little underwhelmed by Circularity 19. Writing about the event later for grassroots US environmental organisation the Sierra Club, Ms Cline said she feared the message coming across was a recycled version of recycling. The author of two books about sustainability and the fashion industry, she said: "The notion that we can go on making as much as we want as long as we reuse it all is a myth that we'll have to leave behind if we ever want to realise the dream of a circular economy."

She quotes Professor Roland Geyer of the University of California at Santa Barbara as saying that recycling and reusing products is something we've tried over and over again without being able to make it work. She says that when she put this to William McDonough after Circularity 19 he agreed. He told her that there has to be more to making our economies circular than chasing higher and higher rates of recycling.

No panacea

Mr McDonough is a Virginia-based architect who, in 2002, formed an unlikely partnership with Hamburg-based chemist Michael Braungart to produce 'Cradle To Cradle', a book that urged us to remake the way we make things. According to Ms Cline, this is the book that introduced many, including her, to "the heady ideas of circularity" and brought those ideas out of academia and into the mainstream discourse. He has been calling for years now for action to follow the sound thinking and fine words. He was the co-founder in 2017, with the C&A Foundation (now called Laudes Foundation), of Fashion For



Hermès leather skills on display at a fair in Asia.

Credit: NY Graphic/ Shutterstock

Good, an Amsterdam-based innovation platform with the stated ambition of driving the transition to a circular apparel and textile industry. But if, in attempting to make this transition, the apparel and textile industry sees 'reuse-recycle' as a panacea, it could be, Mr McDonough says, "problematic".

His view, as he explained it to Elizabeth Cline, is that recycling more used clothes to spin recycled fibres to make more clothes is all about quantity. Quality matters a great deal and manufacturers need to pay more attention to the types of material they use.

One-way ticket

The point is that, although use of recycled polyester is growing, projections suggest that consumption of virgin polyester will keep growing too. Changing Markets Foundation, a London-based consultancy, said in its February 2021 report 'Fossil Fashion' that synthetic fibres will grow their share of the total global fibre market from 69% now to 73% by 2030, with polyester accounting for 85% of all synthetic fibres' share. By 2030, the report predicts, world polyester fibre production will grow from 65 million tonnes in 2020 to more than 90 million tonnes in 2030. Over that timeframe, it says recycled polyester will consistently have a share of about 8% of the total; this means that annual consumption of virgin polyester will be around 85 million tonnes in 2030. Its source for these figures is the petrochemical industry.

"Recycling will not solve fashion's problems," the report says. "Currently, less than 1% of clothes are recycled to make new clothes. Virtually all recycled polyester in clothing comes not from recycled garments, but from recycled plastic bottles." It points out that, with limited options for viable fibre-to-fibre polyester recycling, at the end of its life, this already recycled polyester is likely to be sent to landfill or incineration. "Turning bottles into recycled polyester fibre, therefore, represents a one-way ticket to disposal," it concludes.

Parallel lives

A more significant development than recycling, in the eyes of Elizabeth Cline, is that more and more brands, including apparel companies, are developing business models that revolve around extending the longevity of their products.

In some cases, Ms Cline claims, the focus for fashion brands is finding, in the second-hand market, a new avenue for growth that will not affect their main revenue streams. "Circularity is being positioned as a way to drive new growth," she observes, "not necessarily as a way to cut down on the use of raw materials. What that means is the circular economy is not replacing the linear economy; it's merely running parallel to it."

Labour of love

In other cases, though, including that of high-end French footwear brand JM Weston, companies are taking pre-owned products back from customers and, if they can, expertly and lovingly reconditioning the objects. Customers who may not be able to afford the brand's full-price products are embracing the second-hand ones enthusiastically. So much so that JM Weston recently expanded this service beyond France, taking it to Japan.

Another important French brand, Hermès, has long made its craftspeople available to carry out repairs on bags it sold years before. Its products have longevity designed into them



Fashion For Good headquarters in Amsterdam.

Credit: Fashion For Good

and making them from high-quality leather lends itself to making sure they are restorable. During 2020, Hermès posted a beautiful, short film on its social media channels showing the work that its senior leather craftspeople carry out when a customer asks for a repair. An experienced member of the team, Farid Hambli, had recently travelled from France to help the brand's team in Hong Kong offer this service there.

On a particular day, a customer got in touch to say she wanted Hermès to restore a bag she had bought for her mother seven years before. Her mother had since died and the bag clearly had immense sentimental value. When it reached Mr Hambli in the small workshop on the twenty-second floor of one of the buildings the brand occupies in Hong Kong, he paused. On touching it, he felt he recognised it. He says in the film that the leather felt familiar, that the bag spoke to him. He checked and found that it was he who had made it while working in one of the company's factories near Lyon. He describes encountering it again as a pleasant surprise and says that, on seeing how well preserved it was, he felt sure the bag will continue its journey through time. "Objects pass through your hands, often after they've had years of use," Mr Hambli says. "The truth is that you can repair genuine luxury goods. That's what luxury is."

Bags and leather that talk to us may be a privilege preserved for experts such as Mr Hambli. However, any company that follows William McDonough's advice and decides to pay more careful attention to the materials it uses ought to see that leather meets the demands of the circular economy perfectly. Rather than create waste and encourage wastefulness, it uses up waste from other industries.

This use of waste from the meat and dairy sectors should also fulfil the wishes of brands that feel the need to flag up their use of recycled content in their products. But leather does more than just recycle its raw material, it upcycles it. Leather is renewable and it allows finished product manufacturers to offer durable, repairable items that customers will keep and love for years. 🌱



HIDE SCANNER

LEATHER QUALITY CERTIFICATION SYSTEM

The only technology available for defects
detection and quality control of Wet Blue and
Wet White hides.



DVLEATHER.COM

T. +39 0444 421463 • info@dvleather.com



The skills of shoe repair specialists closely match those of the higher profile artisans that create bespoke made-to-measure shoes for high-end consumers. All Credits: CNC

Flair for repair



RENEWABLE



WASTE-FREE



LONG-LASTING



REPAIRABLE



SUSTAINABLE



SMEs



GREEN JOBS

In April 2021, for the fourteenth time no less, France's Institut National des Métiers d'Art (INMA), a national, state-run body for promoting the work of artisans, organised a festival called the Journées Européennes des Métiers d'Art. The event is a week-long celebration of arts, crafts and the skills of the thousands of people who still make beautiful, valuable products from traditional materials, using know-how that has passed from generation to generation.

Central to this event are public demonstrations of the skills that artisans still have today, allowing consumers to see up close the effort, the dexterity, the skill and the *savoir-faire* that goes into making products that many people may take for granted. This, the organisers of the Journées Européennes des Métiers d'Art hope, can help restore a connection between consumer products and people.

It was their intention to offer these demonstrations in person in 2021 at the Galerie des Gobelins, a tapestry workshop-turned museum in Paris. Covid-19 restrictions put an end to that idea but the festival went ahead anyway, online. A host of artisan activities featured, across 16 different categories (from glass and crystal to toys), each encompassing dozens of types of work that require craft skills.

France's Conseil National du Cuir believes specialist shoe repair professionals are fervent defenders of circular-economy values.

Essential questions

Leather is, in its own right, one of the 16 categories and national industry body the Conseil National du Cuir (CNC) is a great supporter of the festival. This year CNC said that one of the aspects of the leather industry it wanted to draw particular attention to was the reparability of good footwear. Skilled shoe repairers, CNC says, are among the artisans who "make leather the essence of their footwear *savoir-faire*". It believes they are also what it calls "fervent defenders of circular-economy values".

It says that the work these people do represents important aspects of the ancient relationship between leather and



footwear. “Repairability is the very essence of the work of the shoemaker,” CNC states. “Shoe repair is an essential link in the lifecycle of a shoe, one that makes it possible to prolong the life of the product and possible, even, to pass it on to a new owner.” Making products with repairability designed and built into them is also a perfect example of a commitment to the circular economy. In CNC’s eyes, leather is key to this because it is “an inherently circular material”. Making products that customers can repair time and time again and keep for years is good for the transition away from the waste-filled ways of recent decades.

Part of everyday life

CNC explains that having the skills of shoe repair specialists on display in towns big and small helps to make the idea of prolonging the life and usefulness of shoes and other products made from leather “a part of everyday life”. It holds this to be true even if there are fewer shoe repairers now than in years gone by. Its calculation is that there were around 45,000 expert shoe repairers in France in the 1950s and 1960s but that, by the dawn of the twenty-first century, their number had fallen to around 6,000.

Its explanation of this is that mid-price and cheap imported shoes from Asia began flooding the French market in the 1980s. It says this was in response to the new demands of a changed society, one that was discovering “a mass consumerism made possible by globalisation”.

Symbols of resistance

However, the industry body says it believes that, for some consumers at least, crises such as the global financial crash of 2008 and the covid-19 pandemic have helped to reverse that trend.

“Making an object last has become a strong symbol of resistance to overproduction and mass consumption,” it says. “Repairable products are now in demand and this is good news for products made from leather because leather is one of the few materials that make this possible. Consumers want products that will last and products that they will be able to mend and make new use of. They are finding that shoe repairers are people they can rely on for this, people who can make old products into something new and beautiful again.”

Skills match

There are still 3,400 shoe repair shops across the different regions of France and, according to CNC, they offer people across the country quick, easy and local access to the ancient art of fashioning leather into footwear. Shoe repairers are able to replace any part that requires maintenance or repair, even if much of their everyday work is on replacing soles and heels. The fact is that their skills in design, unstitching, preparing leather, cutting it and restitching, closely match those of the higher-profile artisans that create bespoke made-to-measure shoes for luxury end consumers.

It could seem at first glance that the twenty-first-century trend of people wearing sneakers for every occasion from weddings to job interviews would present a new threat to skilled shoe repairers, but CNC has identified some benefits from this, too. Real sneaker-heads are approaching their local shoe repair shops to ask experts there to restore vintage athletic shoes or to personalise a favourite pair. This has even helped attract younger footwear professionals to the idea of setting themselves up in the repair business, with vibrant



Leather is the essence of footwear savoir-faire, according to France’s Conseil National du Cuir.

shop environments and a strong social media presence to boot, all of which helps raise the sector’s profile.

Its success in attracting young talent and passing on traditional skills is one of the aspects of the wider French leather sector that CNC is most proud of and most ready to point to in signalling the industry’s circular-economy credentials. There is expansion among its big name luxury groups and an intense effort to recruit and train new generations of leather artisans. Most of the French industry’s 13,000 companies, though, are small; its total workforce in France is currently 130,000 people.

In a point that CNC made last year in a social media campaign, it said this workforce saves a combined total of 170,000 tonnes of by-product from the food industry from being thrown away in France every year, explaining that this would be equivalent in weight to 24 Eiffel Towers. The shoe repair specialists make an important contribution to that effort. 🌱



EXEL LETEX VANDONI TOUCHMILL

for leather, for you



shaping the future
by chemistry

info@gscspa.it
www.gscgroup.it



gsc.gscgroup



gsc_gscgroup



gsc-group-s.p.a.



Leather artisanship is central to Loewe's luxury identity.

Credit: Loewe



Hand, head and heart



RENEWABLE



WASTE-FREE



LONG-LASTING



REPAIRABLE



SUSTAINABLE



SMEs



RECYCLED

“Fine art is that in which the hand, the head and the heart go together,” said English artist, art critic and patron John Ruskin in *The Cestus of Aglaia*, the *Queen of the Air*, first published in 1905. An impactful proponent of the Arts and Crafts movement in nineteenth-century Britain, which blossomed from an appreciation for the natural world and making things by hand, Mr Ruskin would surely have taken note of the at once artisanal, yet thoroughly modern, mindfulness towards excess materials exhibited by luxury fashion houses Loewe (owned by LVMH) and Chloé (Richemont) in recent months.

Both brands have pulled leftover leather from their own previous collections to craft new, high-end leathersgoods. For Loewe, headed up by creative director Jonathan Anderson since 2013, this has taken the form of ‘The surplus project’, in which the Spanish house’s woven basket handbags have been reimagined with unused leather – already of the “highest quality and lowest impact”, the brand says – from its archives, cut into strips and subsequently braided together by hand in a lattice design. A second ‘surplus’ offering, the Crab bag charm, similarly incorporates leather from earlier Loewe stock, although this time the material has taken shape

Following consumer backlash and mounting regulation surrounding fashion’s clandestine practice of destroying leftover merchandise, enterprising luxury houses have looked within to find ways of beautifying their waste leather.

Green in more ways than one, there is money to be saved ~ and made.

through a series of intricate, handmade folds. While differing in form and hue, the iconic properties of the leather selected are stressed: either smooth calfskin or finely textured, soft grained calfskin.

Meanwhile, Paris-based Chloé – where famously environmentally astute, craft-forward designer Gabriela Hearst has been at the helm since December 2020 – showed fifty one-off upcycled vintage leather Edith handbags during its autumn-winter 2021 Paris presentation, Ms Hearst's debut for the brand. Revamped using leftover fabrics from the collection, including leather, silk and wool, each piece is unique. In homage to the house's founder, Gaby Aghion, one bag in particular features signature Chloé scallops (first shown by Ms Aghion in 1960) in leather, upcycled from surplus material seen elsewhere on an autumn-winter 2021 trench coat. According to British *Vogue*, Ms Hearst's concept resulted in a collection that was “four times as sustainable” as the previous year's, under designer Natacha Ramsay-Levi.

Raw style

Whereas Boston Consulting Group estimates that the global market for second-hand apparel, footwear and accessories (a growing strain of sustainability, particularly in Asia) is currently worth as much as \$30-40 billion, relatively little research has been published as to the economic value of the fashion industry's leftover materials, also known as deadstock. Co-founder and CEO of New York-based online deadstock marketplace Queen of Raw, Stephanie Benedetto, suggests that this figure could be as much as \$120 billion, however. Further underscoring the real market value of unused leather and textile stock, French luxury conglomerate LVMH is slated to unveil a similar marketplace of its own later this year, according to recent reports in *Vogue Italia* and *Harper's Bazaar*. By Paris-based ethical and sustainable finance outlet Novethic's estimates, this could be announced as soon as late April.

“For some of our enterprise customers,” Ms Benedetto explains to *World Leather*, “deadstock eats up to 15% or more of their bottom line in just one year. At that volume, waste isn't just environmentally irresponsible, it's a CFO issue.” Keen to point out the fiscal currency of surplus materials, she emphasises that some companies do not even realise how much leftover stock they have, let alone the value of it. Although Queen of Raw, which has previously worked with companies including LVMH and H&M, does not have an exact figure for the proportion of leather offered within its overall online mix (this changes every day, Ms Benedetto tells us, owing to the nature of buying and selling inventory), it is a “pretty big” category, she says. Even as deadstock, leather is “extremely valuable”.

The marketplace tries to obtain trend-led deadstock that matches what its 325,000-strong active buying community, which is looking for ranges from haute couture to luxury and fast fashion. After witnessing a spike in cotton and other personal protective equipment (PPE)-appropriate textiles due to the pandemic, Ms Benedetto observes that buyers' appetite for deadstock leather has been “coming back” recently.

Local greens

Queen of Raw, which encompasses buyers and sellers on “every” continent and reportedly grew by more than 144% in the first quarter of 2021, as a result of covid-19's impact on supply chains, is not limited to mapping the world's deadstock, however. A crucial aspect involves trying to locate buyers near to where the ‘waste’ is sited. “If we can find locally sourced or locally available deadstock, located



Queen of Raw recognises the “value, quality, artisanal nature and beauty of leather” and seeks to rescue the material from landfill or incineration. Credit: Queen of Raw

where someone is manufacturing or going to use it, we cut down on carbon emission costs, too,” Ms Benedetto says. Targeting large brands and retailers is, therefore, key to this mission. In partnering with companies who operate at scale, access is granted to the suppliers with their ‘ecosystem’ who either physically hold or still partially own some of the surplus materials Queen of Raw is able to sell via its blockchain-enabled platform. (Queen of Raw itself does not hold any stock.)

Ms Benedetto and her co-founder Phil Derasmo initially started their marketplace as a United States-specific enterprise in 2018, but “very quickly realised that supply chains are global, this is a global problem, our community is global and we needed to go global,” the former tells *World Leather*. Today, around 40% of its business takes place internationally. Interestingly, while buyers can search by fabric provenance on Queen of Raw's website, the company has found that “more people are concerned with where materials are physically located than where they came from”, according to Ms Benedetto. “That's been our hottest search criteria,” she says, putting this down to the economic and sustainable benefits of locally located deadstock.

Long-term, the goal is to onboard as many large brands and retailers as possible, in order to make their surplus available to more people around the world and, by extension, “democratise” access to leather and other resources, in Ms Benedetto's words. “A lot of our customers couldn't get access to this quality stuff at this price point or at these volumes before and now they can,” she elaborates. Ultimately, though, minimising global waste and water usage for the benefit of both people and planet is closest to the Queen of Raw's heart. She has said previously that she doesn't mind writing herself out of the market. Do not mistake Ms Benedetto for being blind to the economics, though: “You cannot just do sustainability for good's sake.” 🌱



Italian footwear group Sergio Rossi is betting big on Asia with a new direction in its 70th year. Its CEO has placed great emphasis on sustainability, with the factory now running on green energy.

Eastern promise



SUSTAINABLE



MARINE-FRIENDLY



GREEN JOBS

On the first anniversary of the death of its founder from complications due to covid-19, footwear brand Sergio Rossi has announced a new direction in its 70th year. Speaking at MicamX, the digital version of the Milan footwear show, its CEO, Riccardo Sciutto, said he will pull the company closer to its growing markets in Asia. "We always want to find a new strategy and new direction. Asia is the present and the future," he said. "You need to fly very high and very low. Very low is touching the quality of the shoes, the concrete way, but very high is to follow the dream and try to move the company over there."

There is no word of a relocation in either company statements or the press, so perhaps the comments are merely a demonstration of how crucial Japan and China are deemed to be to sales growth. The company has been focusing on China for a few years: at the end of 2018 it partnered brand management and distribution house Luxba Group to boost sales among Chinese millennials. Luxba manages the Chinese strategies for companies including Moschino and DSquared2, and Chinese press has reported that the group can be key to cracking a market already filled with luxury offerings.

"We relaunched the brand aiming to stay true to the DNA and heritage of Sergio Rossi, keeping in mind the modern woman of today and allowing us to communicate to a new, fresh audience: it is crucial to keep in mind the tastes and preferences of the Chinese millennials," said Mr Sciutto. At that time, Sergio Rossi had 10 locations in China, but has since opened stores in Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Chengdu.

Pulsating heart

Founder Sergio Rossi began making shoes in the 1950s in San Mauro Pascoli in Italy, following in his father's footsteps, and created his brand with his brother in 1968. In the 1970s, he provided shoes for Gianni Versace's catwalk shows and became renowned in fashion circles and synonymous with 'Made in Italy' excellence.

While the headquarters and offices are based in Milan, the "pulsating heart" is the factory in San Mauro Pascoli, where more than 1,000 shoes are created by hand each day by 150 skilled artisans, 65% of whom have been with the company for more than a decade. Ninety-five per cent of suppliers are

The sr1 pump was introduced in spring 2017, often including a metal plaque and leather tongue. All Credits: Sergio Rossi



based in Italy, a quarter are from the local district and all leather is from Italian tanneries. "Leather is the most important material of our production, not only for quantity and value, but also because it defines the style of Sergio Rossi's shoes," said the company.

The plant, inaugurated in 2003, is equipped to sketch, design, develop and produce all types of women's luxury footwear, from flat styles to high heels, as well as to shorten the time-to-market, increasingly oriented towards a "see now, buy now" model. The plant includes two production lines, two warehouses, a prototype department and a logistic hub, capable of dispatching up to 5,000 pairs of shoes per day all over the world.

Private equity

The company was bought by Gucci in 1999, by luxury group Kering in 2005, and then sold to private equity firm Investindustrial in 2015. The firm brought in Mr Sciutto and Andrea Morante (as president) from Kering jewellery brand Pomellato to change its direction and renew a push into international markets.

Mr Sciutto reshuffled the head office teams, from the design to communication, and says he put San Mauro Pascoli Factory back "at the centre of the story". He instigated seasonless collections and launched the sr1 collection based on classic designs. The sr1 slipper, the first model introduced, recalled the daily flat shoes that marked the first success of Sergio Rossi, while the sr1 pump was a tribute to the allure of the 90s' supermodels.

"The greatest challenge when I arrived was rethinking the factory at the centre of the process," explains Mr Sciutto. "We need to balance heritage and innovation. My motto is 'think heritage, play digital'. The magic of the artisan makes me very proud, but at the same time we need to work on the digital side, selling online."

The brand relaunch also included a new store concept, replicated around the world, to create an "experiential environment" for customers, as well as a huge marketing push on Western and Chinese social media. He introduced the first sneaker collection in 2019, hiring new artisans and developing new manufacturing expertise to keep the quality in line with the other styles.

Part of the men's collection and the cutting phases were internalised to centralise the production, adding new cutting machines so 70% could be done in-house. "By doing so, we ensure to pass on the knowhow from generation to generation, spreading a sustainability mindset among our artisans while having an almost complete ownership of the cutting process," he says.

Green energy focus

Mr Sciutto introduced sustainability measures and reporting, focusing on three angles: human capital, local community and energy. In the company's 2019 sustainability report, it sets out its human targets as: training, attraction and retention of best talents, and welfare, health and safety. Local community goals are stated as: preserve local artisanal traditions, quality of living and socio-economic development of local communities, and philanthropic activities. In 2019, representatives from the Lineapelle exhibition directed a leather course at the factory, teaching technicians and other employees about the tanning process and chemistries to deepen their knowledge.



There are up to 120 steps required in the production process.

Sergio Rossi is also a signatory to the United Nations Global Compact and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It has worked hard over the past few years to reduce energy consumption, investing in its infrastructure and installing 3,500 square meters of photovoltaic panels on the roof, as well as substituting all halogen lamps with LED models.

The company reduced energy consumption by 18% in 2019 compared with 2018 (29% compared to 2015) and cut greenhouse gas emissions linked to business travel by air, train and rented cars by 30%. Since January 2020, all energy used in the factory has been from renewable sources. "Sooner or later, customers will ask for this," adds Mr Sciutto. "It's impossible to do everything, but if everyone can do their best, we will make a better world."

Changes afoot

The company now has a worldwide distribution network of 65 stores, of which 50 are directly owned flagship stores in prime luxury locations, and ships to 85 countries. Revenues in 2019 were €67 million, 14% higher than the year before.

Mr Sciutto says that partly due to the coronavirus pandemic, the future looks very different. "The market has changed drastically, so have we. We will never come back as before, we will be different. My goal is to be ready for the restart. We need to be much more flexible and quick."

Despite the changes, staying true to the company's heritage and roots appears to be key to success, building on the legacy of the founder and the strength of the name. His death in April 2020 was met with sadness and tributes from footwear greats around the world, praising his generosity, drive and vision. "The great maestro is always our reference," concludes Mr Sciutto. "We want to take his incredible heritage into the future." 🌱



The new Parva Mea, the world's most expensive handbag.

All Credits: Boarini Milanesi



The sustainable €6 million bag



RENEWABLE



LONG-LASTING



SUSTAINABLE



MARINE-FRIENDLY

Longevity equals circularity; the longer a consumer keeps a handbag, the better. If original owners pass the products on to daughters and granddaughters and the new owners keep and love the bags for years, too, the product lasts even longer, is even more sustainable and even more in sync with the circular economy.

One incentive bag manufacturers can offer to convince customers to keep products for a long time is to make those products expensive. In 2020, Bologna-based brand Boarini Milanesi took this idea to a new limit, adding a bag to its Parva Mea range that comes with a price tag of €6 million, or more than \$7 million. That's €6 million for one bag, a new record. Guinness World Records lists the most valuable handbag until now as the 1001 Nights Diamond Purse from Geneva-based jewellery brand Mouawad. It incorporates more than 4,500 diamonds. It was valued in 2010 at a mere \$3.8 million.

In-house artisans

Entrepreneurs Carolina Boarini and Matteo Rodolfo Milanesi had not even founded their company then. They made their first handbag, a model called Elegantia, in 2014. They then spent the next two years perfecting every detail

Bologna-based luxury brand Boarini Milanesi broke a world record last year when it launched a new version of its Parva Mea model, the most expensive handbag in the world. The eye-watering price-tag supports rather than detracts from the product's circular credentials, the company argues.

before formally launching Boarini-Milanesi. In September 2018, they opened a showroom in a nineteenth-century palazzo in central Bologna. A new, proprietary workshop followed a few months later, allowing Boarini Milanesi to control all aspects of production, with in-house artisans taking

charge of everything from leather-cutting to final stitching.

Each of its bags is made-to-order, entirely by hand, with the owner's name engraved onto the leather. Ms Boarini and Mr Milanese have met most of their customers through private, invitation-only showcase events in high-end hotels in London, Monte Carlo, New York and other cities, using these to generate orders.

Prices at Boarini Milanese have typically ranged from €1,950 for the Ninfa Red Carpet model to €50,000 for a crocodile-leather version of the Elegancia. But the new Parva Mea has blown this out of the water. The new bag is made from alligator leather, with ten white-gold butterflies encrusted with diamonds, sapphires and tourmalines for decoration. It intends to make only three of these bags, with its artisans devoting 1,000 hours of work to each one.

Waste avoidance

From the €6 million the Bologna-based luxury brand hopes to bring in from each one, it has said it will donate €800,000 from each sale to ocean-cleaning programmes. In comments to media about this idea, Ms Boarini has said that raising awareness of the need to protect the oceans of the world was one of the main drivers of the project. Another is this wider idea of consuming fewer things and of investing instead in objects that will last for years and retain their value.

Using leather instead of synthetic materials in any bag, including €6 million ones, is also good for stopping ocean plastic pollution. Leather has a lower impact on the environment and is more sustainable, the brand insists, adding: "The reason we believe this is that leather is an extremely durable material. A handbag made from leather can last generations. In this way, we can go back to buying fewer items and keeping them for longer, like we used to do in the past. This reduces our impact on the environment." In contrast, products made from synthetic materials often become damaged quite quickly. People throw these ruined products away and buy new ones, creating high volumes of waste.

Conversations about conservation

Boarini Milanese has been a frequent contributor to the conservation conversation that never seems to go away when it comes to exotic leather. It has drawn up its own research paper on the subject. In it, it quotes Dr Daniel Natusch, a wildlife biologist specialising in reptiles, who chairs a specialist group at the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. He says: "Buy a crocodile bag and you save five crocodiles." The research paper presents three scientific arguments for alligator and crocodile bags being a responsible use of resources.

The first of these is that crocodiles and alligators are viewed by communities living in close contact with them as dangerous and the source of a threat to people and to farm animals. Programmes for the responsible control of crocodiles and alligators have been successful in a number of countries, leading to an increase in population numbers. From 1960 to date in Louisiana, the alligator population has gone from being in danger of extinction to reaching more than 2 million in the wild.

Research the Italian company has carried out suggests that the eco-system of wetlands, where the reptiles live, is of great importance in the battle against carbon emissions. They are effective in converting carbon-dioxide into oxygen through photosynthesis. Sustainable crocodile and alligator farming serves as a good incentive for local communities to



Co-founders Matteo Rodolfo Milanese and Carolina Boarini.

keep their wetlands intact, rather than try to use the space for farming or housing.

Finally, sustainable crocodile and alligator programmes generate revenue for communities that are often economically disadvantaged. Carolina Boarini has said she wants to use these research findings to break down "fake news that influences public opinion, putting this delicate safeguarding work at risk". Co-founder, Matteo Rodolfo Milanese, said he thought luxury brands that have made public commitments to stop using exotic leathers are making a mistake. He described these moves as marketing ploys "to capture an audience that ignores reality" and he said they could put the conservation of some reptile species and the wellbeing of vulnerable communities in jeopardy.

Message to world leaders

Carolina Boarini is far from new to sustainability thinking or to presenting her ideas about it. While she was still at school, she was one of four students who represented Italy at a special fringe event for young people at the thirty-first G8 Summit in 2005. The summit that year took place in Scotland and Ms Boarini and young people from the other G8 countries held workshops and discussions before drawing up their own communiqué. Twelve of their number attended a special ceremony at the main G8 gathering to hand the document over to the head of the host government, then UK prime minister, Tony Blair. Carolina Boarini was one of the 12.

The communiqué consisted of eight points, each of which called on G8 leaders to do a better job of looking after the environment and helping people in developing economies. In the third point, prophetically for Ms Boarini, they insisted that it was necessary to create an international system for deciding if products are environmentally friendly. And they asked for a symbol that would make it immediately clear to consumers if a product was sustainable, with careful monitoring to make sure brands using the symbol were meeting the necessary sustainability standards.

While she and Matteo Rodolfo Milanese wait for an international system like this to come along, they will continue to find their own ways to argue against greenwashing. 🌱



Canada's minister of finance, Chrystia Freeland, wears shoes from Zvelle for Budget Day 2021.

CREDIT: DAVE CHAN

The first woman in Canada to become minister of finance, Chrystia Freeland, delivered her inaugural federal budget speech on April 19. As detailed here, fine leather shoes from Italy had an important role to play in making the occasion historic.

Shoes blaze Budget-Day trail

For reasons no one can explain, Budget Day in Canada is a big day for the footwear industry. The finance minister nearly always wears a pair of new shoes to give the official speech in which the federal budget for the year ahead is revealed to parliament and the nation. "The origins behind the Canadian tradition of the minister of finance wearing new shoes to deliver the budget speech in the House of Commons remain unknown," the Parliament of Canada confirms. "The earliest mention we have been able to verify appears in newspaper articles related to the 1955 budget speech." But the tradition is older than that because the newspaper reports in question take then-finance minister, Walter Harris, to task for choosing to wear "almost new" rather than brand new shoes as tradition dictated even then.

Visual messages

Now, a pre-speech photo opportunity of the minister with new shoes is an important part of the event and politicians have begun to use this as a chance to send a visual message to citizens about the state of the economy.

Following the financial crisis of 2008 and 2009, for example, Jim Flaherty had shoes he already owned resoled instead of buying new ones for Budget Day to offer an example of frugality. In 2015, his successor, Joe Oliver, presented the first balanced budget since the crisis and, to mark this, decided to deliver his speech wearing running shoes from, yes, New Balance.

In 2017 and 2018, finance minister, Bill Morneau, joined those who have used the occasion to promote Canada's domestic shoe industry, choosing brogues from Edmonton-based brand Poppy Barley. First, he picked the company's Edmonton Oxford Black shoes and followed up a year later with the Jasper Derby Black Calf and Black Deer. Poppy Barley still stocks these as two of only four men's dress-shoe styles on offer (its main focus is on women's footwear) and it makes their status as Budget Day shoes a selling point in each case.

New ground

Ordinarily then, new shoes for Budget Day 2021 in April would have broken no new ground. Even the minister's choice of shoes from a Canadian brand was just following a tradition that



predecessors, including Bill Morneau, had already established. But there was one important change. When Mr Morneau resigned in August 2020, his replacement was Chrystia Freeland, who, in addition to the duties she already had as deputy prime minister, became the country's fortieth finance minister.

She is the first woman to hold the finance role and, therefore, the first woman to have to choose new shoes for the big Budget Day photo opportunity. The visual messages that her selection sent included the clear indication that Canada is a country for entrepreneurs, a country for people from all cultures and all parts of the world, and, definitely, a country for women.

Her choice was a pair of a new version of Rayna pumps from Toronto-based brand Zvelle. The shoes are so new to the brand's collection that its founder, Elle AyoubZadeh, rushed an advance pair to the minister just in time for her speech on April 19. The shoes come from her main supplier, a family-run company in Italy. They have a six-centimetre heel and are made from black nappa, tanned in Italy. "The minister appreciated the craftsmanship of the shoes, their classic, timeless look and the fact that they are comfortable," the Zvelle founder says.



Canada's deputy prime-minister, Chrystia Freeland, added the role of minister of finance to her responsibilities in August 2020.

CREDIT: SEAN KILPATRICK



Rayna pumps from Zvelle, a footwear brand launched in Toronto in 2015 by Elle AyoubZadeh, include 'wing detailing' on the upper in tribute to another pioneering woman, Amelia Earhart.

CREDIT: GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

Proud footwear start-up

Elle AyoubZadeh launched Zvelle in 2015, having arrived in Canada around eight years earlier. She had spent time studying and working in Australia and New Zealand, but her origins are in the Middle East. She was born in Iran. Rayna was the name she gave to the first shoes she designed. "In Persian script, the number five looks like an upside-down heart," Ms AyoubZadeh explains, "and this inspired the design. You can see the shape of the heart in the vamp of the Rayna shoe the minister wore."

She says she is proud to have supplied the shoes to Chrystia Freeland and to have been a part of history. The design incorporates another element that Zvelle has developed, something else that honours trail-blazing women. This version of the Rayna includes what she calls "wing detailing" on the side of the upper. She borrowed this idea from another Zvelle model, the Amelia, named in honour of the first woman to fly alone, non-stop across the Atlantic, Amelia Earhart.

Ms AyoubZadeh says the main delivery of the Rayna shoes the minister wore has been held up by covid-19 but should be in stock soon. "Had it not been for covid, the shoes would be here right now," she insists. They are coming soon and will be available to customers in the US as well as Canada, giving customers on both sides of the border the chance to grab a piece of history. 🌍

MAGAZINES



World Leather
The world's leading magazine for the leather industry.
(6 issues per year)
UK: £80.00
Airmail: £135

FROM **£8**
PER MONTH



World Footwear
All you need to know to assist you in the global footwear market.
(4 issues per year)
UK: £80.00
Airmail: £135

FROM **£8**
PER MONTH



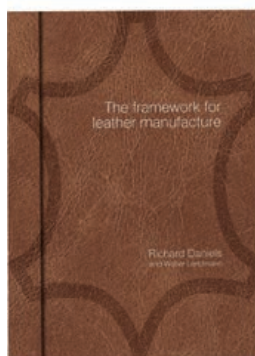
WSA
The international technical trade magazine for performance and sports materials.
(4 issues per year)
UK: £80.00
Airmail: £135

FROM **£8**
PER MONTH



Inside Denim
Keep up to date with denim developments from raw material to finished product with in-depth coverage of advances at fibre and fabric level.
(3 issues per year)

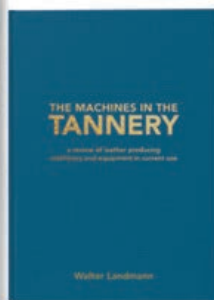
BOOKS



The Framework for Leather Manufacture:
£49.00



Tannery of the Year; The Awards Book 2018:
£30.00



The Machines in the Tannery:
£49.00



FROM **£15**
PER MONTH

Leatherbiz Weekly
A weekly round up of all the news relevant to people in the leather industry including exclusive market intelligence for purchasers of finished leather.

Websites
Designed to provide up-to-the-minute news and market intelligence.

leatherbiz.com

SPORTSTEXTILES.COM

footwearbiz.com

insideDenim.com

All books printed are in English. Prices are subject to 20% VAT where applicable.

ORDER FORM

Please complete and scan/photocopy/email back to john@worldtrades.co.uk

NAME:		POSITION:	
COMPANY:		NATURE OF BUSINESS:	
ADDRESS:			
TEL:		E-MAIL:	
PLEASE BEGIN MY SUBSCRIPTION TO:		PLEASE SEND ME _____ COPIES OF:	
MASTERCARD ☐ VISA ☐ AMERICAN EXPRESS ☐ DINERS CLUB ☐		EXPIRY DATE: /	
CARD NO.:		SECURITY CODE:	
SIGNATURE:		3 numbers on back of card — 4 on front of AMEX	

Credit cards will be charged in GB Pounds. Your credit card company may charge you for this service.

World Leather April/May 2021

WORLD LEATHER

Advertiser's Index

Company	Page	Company	Page
ATC	IFC	GSC Group	47
Bergi	21	Hardy	31
Carlessi	35	Leatherbiz	09
Cartigliano	36-37	Mimosa	41
Debag Kimya	18	Poletto	14
DV Leather	44	Trumpler	25
Erretre	17	UHSLA	13
Equitan	27	United Chemicals	32
GeMaTa	BC	Sustainable Leather Foundation	23

Head Office

36 Crosby Road North, Liverpool L22 4QQ, UK
Tel: +44 151 928 9288 E-mail: wl@worldtrades.co.uk

Editor	Stephen Tierney
Deputy Editor	Clare Grainger
Commercial Manager /Technical Editor	Matthew Abbott
Assistant Content Developer	Charlotte Robson
Consultant Editor	David Buirski
Graphic Designer	Tim Button
Subscriptions	John Collins
Administration	Lisa Fabian-Smith
Publisher & CEO	Simon Yarwood

Worldwide Sales Offices

China/Hong Kong/Taiwan:

Ringier Trade Publishing Ltd.
 1001 Tower 3, Donghai Plaza, 1486 Nanjing Road West,
 Shanghai 200040 China
 Tel +86-21 6289 5533
 For China: Marco Chang, General Manager. E-mail: marco@ringiertrade.com
 For Taiwan: Kelly Wong, Taiwan manager. E-mail: kwong@ringier.com.hk

India:

S Sankaran, 106 Vepery High Road, Periamet, Madras 600 003
 Tel: 91 44 25386566 Fax: 91 44 28343685
 E-mail: indianleather@yahoo.com

Indonesia:

Niran Rapi BSc., Gedung Cahaya Palmerah 3rd fl, #307
 Jl. Palmerah Utara III No.9 Jakarta Barat 11480 Indonesia
 Tel: +62 021 5329343 / 5329014 Fax: +62 021 5329344
 E-mail: esdekatraco@centrin.net.id

Mexico:

Mr. Gennaro de la Garza, Calle Schubert 520, Col. Leon Moderno,
 Leon, GTO. C.P. 37480
 Tel: +52 477 712 1882 Fax: +52 477 712 1882
 E-mail: genarodelagarza@hotmail.com
 or delagarzagenaro@yahoo.com.mx

Pakistan:

Abdul Rab Siddiqi, Office M – 2, DADA Garden, Jamaluddin Afghani Road,
 Sharfabad, Karachi 74800
 Tel: 021-34893095 Mobile: 0333-2323166
 Email: arsidqi@yahoo.com



GREENSTARS



LESS WASTE, MORE NATURE

gemata.com