



COMESA-LLPI NEWSLETTER

Leather for Health, Wealth and Luxury!

Oct. - Dec. 2015 (Issue No. 4)

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COMESA/LLPI Achieves QMS and EMS Certification!!!

COMESA/Leather and Leather Products Institute is proud to announce that, after rigorous auditing process, it has achieved a combined ISO 9001 Quality Management System (QMS) and ISO 14001 Environmental Management System (EMS) certification in December 2015 from a UK based UKAS (United Kingdom Accreditation Service) accredited Certification body.

COMESA/LLPI, through a rigid application of the internationally recognized benchmark of QMS and EMS into all facets of its operations, is committed to strive continually for operational excellence as well as sensible environmental responsibility and corporate accountability.

As LLPI becomes global player, the envisioned impact of this certification is an assurance of high quality service delivery to Member States, the private sector (including SMEs) and the Academia fraternity in the region and Africa as a whole.

COMESA/LLPI Facilitated a Scientific Visit of 5th Year Leather Technology Students from the Sudan University of Science and Technology to Ethiopia



As part of the cooperation between the COMESA-Leather and Leather Products Institute (COMESA/LLPI) and the Sudan University of Science and Technology (SUST), ten 5th year leather technology students and two Instructors (coordinators) undertook an intensive exploratory visit to Ethiopia during 14th-31st of December 2015.

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Prof. Mwingikione Mwingihija, Executive Director of COMESA-LLPI

Dear Esteemed Readers,

I am pleased to share with you this fourth quarter issue of the COMESA/Leather and Leather Products Institute that highlights some of the major activities of the Institute during the ending quarter of 2015.

COMESA/LLPI has reached and/or surpassed all of its goals set forth for this year in delivering consistent and sustained quality services in the leather sector to the private and public sectors in the region in general, and to member States in particular. Thus, 2015 was a year of success not only in the activities front but also in terms of how we translate our Mission, Vision and priorities into tangible actions.

Some of our most impressive accomplishments this year encompassed the formulation, validation and launch of Leather Value Chain Strategies for 9(nine) member States, formulation and approval for implementation of the COMESA/LLPI's 10 Years Strategy (2016/2025), mobilization of resources of 0.75million USD through development of project proposals to conduct various leather sector development activities, the innovative approach towards regional design studio to enhance value addition, and finally achieving the Certification for Quality Management and Environmental Management Systems at the end of the year.

During this last quarter, there has been heightened activities towards the regional leather sector development. These activities, among many other developments attained by the Institute, can be witnessed within the contents of this Newsletter. I would like to register all my gratified appreciation to our member States, partner organizations and each of you for your continued support that has been a corner stone to our strong performance and the delivery of tangible and realized results.

As we end 2015, we make a special plea to continue "to walk the talk" with us on this successful path towards development of our Region's leather Industry. On behalf of LLPI Staff and the Consultative Forum (member States, Core Team, SME platform, and Academia) in our Triple Helix Approach, I wish to extend our wishes and prayers to all of you towards the successful and prosperous New Year 2016.

Prof. Mwingikione Mwingihija, Executive Director

COMESA/LLPI and ITC Strengthened Collaboration Through SITA Program

COMESA/LLPI has worked with ITC since 2010, under the PACT II project, which was funded by CIDA. Under this project, the two institutions implemented the following activities jointly: designed the COMESA Regional Leather Value Chain and the Zimbabwe Leather Value Chain Strategies through a participatory process; facilitated the participation of SMEs from COMESA countries during the All Africa Leather Fair in 2011 and 2012 and Buyers and Sellers Meetings between tanneries from the COMESA countries and buyers in India and Italy. These activities have generated the following outputs, outcomes and impacts, which are summarized in Table 1. Realizing that the joint collaboration between the two institutions has a great potential of creating outputs and outcomes that have far reaching and sustainable impacts, LLPI and ITC have agreed to enter into an MOU covering a period of 5 years.

A milestone mission to further discuss potential areas of collaboration, which would form the nuclei of collaboration, was undertaken by Professor Mwinyikione Mwinyihija (Executive Director of COMESA/LLPI) and Mr. Nicholas Mudungwe (Cluster Development Expert) to Geneva (ITC Head Office in mid December 2015). During the mission, LLPI

held several strategic and technical meetings, of which the notable ones related to the presentation of the LLPI Strategy and the SITA project. Senior manager welcomed the LLPI Strategy, which they judged as a well articulated strategy that would form the foundation for collaboration of the two institutions. The progress in the implementation and work plan for 2016 was shared; however, it was agreed that a comprehensive report of the environment need to be prepared, and this work is under progress. The draft MOU has been crafted and set to be completed by the end of the first quarter of 2016. See below LLPI Executive Director posing for a picture with other ITC Senior Staff.



Table 1 :

Intervention	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
Strategy formulation through participatory processes;	COMESA regional leather Value Chain strategy;	Influenced the policy direction in the COMESA region to promote value addition and supporting of SMEs; Strengthened COMESA/LLPI's capacity to formulate Strategies using Participatory methodologies;	Improved sector coordination across the COMESA region, which have seen the membership of COMESA/LLPI increasing by 25%
	Zimbabwe Leather Value Strategy	Based on the same methodology 8 strategies have been formulated by LLPI ¹	Improved resource mobilization to support the implementation of the strategy;
Capacity building of COMESA/LLPI;	3 Experts were recruited under PACT ²	These 3 Experts have formed the Core Team that has transformed the performance of LLPI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The demand of LLPI services across Member States have increased significantly; » LLPI has received positive commendation during COMESA Ministerial and Summit meetings » Improved fundraising and website popularity
Promotion of ³ intra and inter trade;	50 SMEs participated All Africa Leather Fair in Addis Abba, Ethiopia;	Business contacts were established between leather goods makers from the rest of COMESA and Ethiopian Tanners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Burundi exports of raw goat skins to the COMESA Region grew from US\$ 0 to US\$ 113,000 between 2012 and 2013; » Exports of leather and leather products from Ethiopia to the COMESA region grew from US\$ 672,000 to US\$ 6,758,000 between 2012 and 2014. » Ethiopia imports of leather and leather products from the COMESA region grew from US\$95,000 to US\$210,000 between 2011 and 2013.

Intervention	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Kenya's imports of leather and leather products from the COMESA region grew from US\$9.5 million to US\$13.3 million 2011 and 2013. » Malawi exports of leather and leather products to the COMESA region grew from US\$ 274,000 to US\$ 495,000 between 2012 and 2013. » Uganda imports of leather and leather products from the COMESA region has grown from US\$ 7,656,000 to US\$ 10,675,000 between 2011 to 2013; » Uganda exports of leather and leather products grew from US\$6.9 million to US\$7.2 million between 2011 and 2013. » Zambia imports of leather and leather products from COMESA grew from US\$ 1,819,000 to US\$ 2,753,000 between 2011 and 2012; » Zambia exports of leather and leather products to COMESA grew by US\$ 1,705,000 to US\$ 2,462,000 between 2011 and 2012. » Zimbabwe exports of leather and leather products to the COMESA region grew from US\$ 661,000 to US\$ 1,384,000 between 2011 and 2012; » Zimbabwe imports of leather and leather products from the COMESA region grew from US\$ 1,544,000 to US\$ 2,250,000 between 2011 and 2012.
	20 Tanners participated in Buyers and sellers meeting in India and Italy	US\$10 million business was clinched with India;	» Exports to India from COMESA of products of chapter 41 has growth from US\$28 million to US\$44 million between 2012 and 2014; however they have been constrained due to lower prices and also long payment periods offered by the Indian market in comparison to China;
		US\$0.6 million business was clinched	» Exports to Italy from the COMESA region grew from US\$96 million to US\$145 million between 2012 to 2014, despite the REACH ⁴ directive impacted negatively on exports to the European market, which resulted in a shift to the Chinese market.
Strengthening of collaboration of Value Chain Players	A Regional Leather Value Chain Core Team was set up	This has been strengthened to include a higher gender representation, and also more Private Sector and Academia, in line with the Triple Helix Concept	<p>Strengthened the strategic focus of LLPI, which has enhanced its performance, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Trained 450 Artisans, of which 30 percent are female and youth; » Increased Governments support of the leather value chain in the region » SME Clusters are being developed in 8 COMESA countries; » Private sector associations are being strengthened based on the Core Team Framework, which was developed during the PACT II project.

(Footnotes)

1 Burundi, Eritrea, Ethiopia (EIFCCOS Cluster), Kenya, Malawi, Uganda, Sudan, Zambia

2 IT expert, Value chain expert and Cluster Expert

3 Trade Data Source: Trade Map, ITC

4 REACH is a regulation of the European Union, adopted to improve the protection of human health and the environment from the risks that can be posed by chemicals, while enhancing the competitiveness of the EU chemicals industry. It also promotes alternative methods for the hazard assessment of substances in order to reduce the number of tests on animals.

COMESA-Leather and Leather Products Institute's (COMESA/LLPI) Regional Leather Industry Development Initiatives at a Glance

COMESA/LLPI, an Intergovernmental Chartered Organization, is a specialized Institution mandated to spearhead the development of the leather sector in the COMESA Region. The Institute is headquartered in Addis Ababa; and its membership encompasses ten COMESA countries, namely; Burundi, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Uganda, Sudan, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The Institute, as part of its task of building productive capacities, value addition and competitiveness in the leather sector, provided support to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) that represent 95% of the enterprises in the sector, in aspects related to technical and entrepreneurial skills; promoted intra trade by facilitating SMEs' participation in national and regional Trade Fairs; facilitated vertical and horizontal collaboration of SMEs, Government and Academia; and facilitated the development of Leather Value Chain Strategies in Burundi, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Uganda and Zambia in 2015.

In addition, COMESA/LLPI has signed several collaboration Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) with global partners that encompassed technical and financial assistance from PTA Bank, BADEA, FAO, USAID-East African Trade and Investment Hub, UNOPS, UK (DFID), COMSec, EU and others for enhanced value addition, productivity, competitiveness, cleaner production and market access in the leather sector, in line with global dynamics,

The Triple Helix Platform (Private and Public sectors and Academia) set-up by the Institute is also increasingly recognized as a provider of capacity-building support and important initiatives helping the regional leather industry.

Considering the fact that Africa is the largest supplier of leather inputs to the world, but the limited leather products manufactured in the region failed to catch up with the fashion dynamics, mainly because of its limited capacity in designing COMESA/LLPI, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat (COMSec), organized in 2015, Public and Private Sector Regional Workshops on the Establishment of a Regional Design Studio for Leather Footwear and Leather Goods.

In conclusion, it can be said that the Institute has made substantial progress in the last few years but there is equally no denying that the Institute still

has a long way to go in the long-term. COMESA/LLPI would like to express its appreciation for the support and cooperation that it continues to receive from the Private and Public sectors and Academia in member States and all Partner Organizations in the performance of its responsibilities. As 2015 comes to an end, the Institute would like also to take this opportunity to extend its wishes for a peaceful and happy life filled with achievements and prosperity in the New Year 2016.

COMESA/LLPI Facilitated a Scientific Visit.....Continued from page 1

The Visiting Programme was facilitated by COMESA/LLPI in collaboration with the Leather Industry Development Institute (LIDI) of Ethiopia that covered intensive visiting program to various leather value chain establishments.

The Visiting Mission aimed towards the exchange of views and knowledge, encompassing the entire leather sector, knowledge institutions, leading suppliers, Government organizations and stakeholders engaged in the manufacturing of leather and leather products in Ethiopia.

The visit programme covered more than 20 various leather sector establishments (tanneries, footwear and leather goods/articles manufacturing etc.), clusters, knowledge institutions, historical sites and market places.

At the end of the programme, 30th of December 2015, the visiting Mission deliberated the visit result and its views and appreciation at COMESA/LLPI office in the presence of representatives from the Sudanese Embassy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.



Zambia Leather Value Chain Strategy was Validated, Launched and Unpacked

Zambia Leather Value Chain Strategy, which was formulated by COMESA/LLPI in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry of Zambia, was Validated, Launched and Unpacked during 7th - 10th December 2015 in Lusaka, Zambia.



Partial View of the Workshop

The Leather Value Chain Strategy of Zambia was presented and discussed at the workshop held at Anina's Lodge, Chilanga, outskirts of Lusaka, on 7th and 8th December 2015. The Strategy Launch and Unpacking program took place on 9th and 10th December 2015, at the Government Complex Hall, Lusaka.



Mr. Tobias Mulimbika, Director of Industry of the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry of the Republic of Zambia delivering his opening remarks during the Validation Workshop

The validation Workshop was opened by Mr. Tobias Mulimbika on behalf of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and

Industry of Zambia. Mr. Zewdu Kebede, Programs Coordinator, on behalf of the Executive Director, made a statement and climate setting address.

The Launch and Unpacking Workshop was officially opened by welcoming address and opening remarks given by Mrs. Kayula Siame, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry of Zambia.

The validation process, launching and unpacking workshops involved participants representing concerned Government Ministries, Authorities, Research Institutions, and Training Centers, SMEs representatives and Support Agencies and Experts Team from COMESA/LLPI. The Workshop drew participants from the various segments of the value chain, from city and peri-urban areas of Lusaka and other districts of Zambia. The Workshop assisted in



Mr. Tobias Mulimbika, left, handing over the Leather Value Chain Document to Mrs. Kayula Siame, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry of Zambia

generating, moderating, collating and prioritizing of important issues.

There were a total of 35 participants drawn from Government, Private Sector and Civil Society/Academia. This is in line with the COMESA/LLPI thrust of employing the Triple Helix approach in improving the performance of the leather value chain in the COMESA region. In addition, the drawing of Stakeholders from across the value chain and the country was aimed at generating a national and balanced view of the issues currently impacting the performance of the leather value chain in Zambia.

Dr. Tadesse H.Mamo, Training, Consultancy and Extension Expert, presented a paper entitled: "The Leather Value Chain Strategy: An Overview" which included the introduction and assessment results of the Zambian Draft Leather Value Strategy and some current regional and global issues in regard

to the leather sector.

Mr. Nicholas Mudungwe, as Team Leader of the Mission, led the whole process of the Validation/ Unpacking workshops and presented the Draft Strategy Validation Process and feedback, the Unpacking Methodology, Dummy Strategy Implementation Pyramid. After each presentation, thorough discussions were made by the Working Groups on customizing the implementation Pyramid in line with the situation in Zambia.

All participants, during the Workshop made contributions, through the use of Meta cards, which were then collated and prioritized through a participatory process. The Workshop participants validated and also prioritized burning issues, and



Professor Mwinyihija Mwinyikione handing over the Final Leather Value Chain Strategy Document to H.E. Mrs. Margret Mwanakatwe, MP, Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry

agreed on the strategic interventions.

At the end of the Workshop (December 11, 2015) Professor Mwinyihija and his Team paid a courtesy call to H.E. Mrs. Margret Mwanakatwe, MP, Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry at her office. During the brief meeting, Professor Mwinyihija handed over the Final Document of the Zambia Leathers Value Chain Strategy to the Minister.

The Minister showed high concern to the Leather Value Chain of Zambia and pledged to closely follow up the implementation process.

COMESA/LLPI at COMESA Policy Organs Meetings 2015

The COMESA-Leather and Leather Products Institute's Management Team, led by the Institute's Executive Director, Prof. Mwinyihija Mwinyikione, and composed of the Programs Coordinator, Mr. Zewdu Kebede, the Administration, Budget and Finance Head, Ms Tigist Hailegiorgis, and the Leather Value Chain Expert and Personal Assistant to the Executive Director, Prof. Mekonnen Hailemariam, attended the 35th Policy Organs Meetings held from December 1 to 8, 2015 at COMESA Secretariat and Taj Pamodzi Hotel, Lusaka, Zambia. The Policy Organs Meetings started with the Committee on Administrative and Budget matters Meeting that took place from 1- 2 December, followed by the COMESA Intergovernmental Committee Meeting from 3-5 December and finally by the 35th COMESA Council of Ministers Meeting held from 7-8 December 2015.

More than 210 delegates, including Ministers in charge of co-ordination of COMESA programmes, representing Governments of the 19 COMESA Member States, COMESA Secretariat, and COMESA Institutions and representatives of Development Partner Organizations participated in the meetings.

The Theme of the 2015 Policy Organs Meetings was "Inclusive and Sustainable Industrialization".



Rwanda Leather Value Chain Comprehensive Strategy Framework Validation, Launch and Unpacking Workshop Held

The Strategy was developed under the Ministry of Trade and Industry, in collaboration with the COMESA/Leather and Leather Products Institute (COMESA/LLPI). Key stakeholders working in the entire value chain participated in the Strategy, formulation process. The Validation, Launch and Unpacking Workshop of the Strategy was held at Sportsview Hotel, Kigali, Rwanda from November 25 to 27, 2015.

The Workshop was attended by 35 participants drawn from the MINICOM, line ministries, different

The COMESA/LLPI Expert Team led by the Institute's Programs Coordinator, Mr. Zewdu Kebede paid courtesy visit to H.E. Mr. Francois Kanimba, Minister of Trade and Industry, on November 27, 2015 and briefed the Honorable Minister on the workshop objectives and outputs. The team also took the opportunity to discuss with the Honorable Minister on various issues with regard to the implementation of the Strategy.



Partial View of the Workshop

public sector institutions, representatives from the private sector along the value chain (slaughter house, hides and skins traders/exporters, leather footwear and leather goods manufacturers) and a team of Experts from COMESA/LLPI. The Workshop was opened by the welcome address and opening statements of Mr. Alex Ruzibukira, Director General Industry (MINICOM) and Mr. Zewdu Kebede, Programs Coordinator (COMESA/LLPI). Both speakers pointed out the importance attributed to the leather sector by the Government of Rwanda in its development agenda and the expectations from the Workshop.

Participants made thorough discussion on the draft Strategy and unanimously validated the key priorities for the strategy that are: Improving the quality and collection of hides and skins; Supporting the development and growth of SMEs which are involved in the production of leather footwear and goods; Setting up of an Industrial Park for the Leather Sector; and Improving Institutional policy, financial support and market intelligence. With value addition to Leather Footwear/goods level it was estimated that the Rwandese leather sector, from its current performance of 14 million USD income, could attain a value of US\$ 170 million.

Training on Transformation, Cluster Development, Work Plan and Responsibility Matrix Design Project Beneficiaries Concluded

Training Workshop on Transformation, Cluster Development, Work Plan and Responsibility Matrix Design for Project Beneficiaries was held during 1 - 4 December 2015 at Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) in Nairobi, Kenya.



Partial View of the Workshop

Though the "Greening SMEs Leather Clusters and Leather Tanning Industry in Kenya" project was funded by the European Union (EU), through the United Nations Environmental Programme and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNEP/UNOPS), the Workshop was organized by COMESA/LLPI and KLDC.

On a broad scale, the Project aims at encouraging eco-friendly entrepreneurship, sustainable

production and consumption of the leather and leather products, tannery waste management and adoption of practices to check of carbon emissions to the atmosphere. The main objective of the training was focusing on:

- » Training for project beneficiaries on the Switch Africa Green (SAG) Project and the areas of focus for the leather sector;
- » Training on Cluster Development;
- » Design of Workplan and Responsibility Matrix.
- » During the workshop the following training and presentations were delivered:
- » Training for Transformation;
- » The importance of Standards in Industrial Development and Certification Requirements (By Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS))
- » The Role of the Ministry in Building the Capacity of Enterprise to meet Environmental Requirements; How can the Government Work with Stakeholders in designing a Road Map for Meeting Environmental Regulations (By Ministry of Environment);
- » The importance of Cleaner Production in the Leather Value Chain: What Strategic Role can the Cleaner Production Centre Play (By Cleaner Production Center);
- » The Role of the Academia in MSMEs development (By Dedani Kimathi);
- » How can KIRDI Assist the Development of MSMEs Clusters (By KIRDI)
- » Introduction to Clusters
- » Project Overview: Greening SMEs Leather Clusters and Leather Tanning Industry in Kenya (COMESA/LLPI)
- » Presentation of the Responsibility Matrix
- » Presentation of profiling tools

Besides the presentations made, group discussions were undertaken on the following topics:

- » What Challenges MSMEs face in Clustering and How can these Challenges be Addressed;
- » What Challenges MSMEs face in Resource Efficiency Management and the Certification Process;
- » What Challenges are Tanneries Facing in Meeting Environment Regulations & What should be done

to Assist them;

- » Improve SMEs competitiveness through energy, space and machinery optimization by promoting joint use under Clusters;
- » Promote recycling and reduction in the use of chemicals with a negative impact to the environment;
- » Developing a roadmap for improving effluent management and quantification of carbon footprint in the leather sector.

During the Workshop, leather footwear and leather goods were showcased to share experiences of SMEs among themselves.

In general, the Training Workshop has given good understanding of the cleaner production and consumption for participants/stakeholders in the leather and leather products sector.



Mini Exhibition During the Workshop



Handing over of Certificates after the workshop

The 3rd Regional Stakeholders Consultative Meeting & COMESA/LLPI 25th Year Anniversary Celebration (1990-2015) Concluded

The 3rd Regional Stakeholders Consultative Meeting & COMESA/LLPI 25th Year Anniversary Celebration was Held on 20th - 21st November 2015 at Haile Resort Hotel, Ziway, Ethiopia.

The Regional Stakeholders Consultative Meeting was held with the objective of presenting the 2015 major achievements and 2016 work plans at COMESA/LLPI Member States Levels.

Participants were drawn from Public and Private and Academia of Member States and Turkey.



Partial view of the Consultative Workshop

During the workshop, the following presentations were made:

- Major Activities Accomplished in 2015 and 2016 Work Plan and Key Factors Taken into Account;
- 2015 Budget/Expenditure Performance and 2016 Proposed Budget;
- Consolidated Resource Mobilization Activities, International Meetings and Strengthening Collaborations in 2015;
- Leather Value Chain Strategy Formulation Performances in 2015 and Plan for 2016;
- COMESA/LLPI Information Systems and Training Platform

Leather Sector Major Activities accomplished in 2015 and Work Plan for 2016 were presented by the following Member States:

- » Burundi
- » Ethiopia
- » Kenya

- » Malawi
- » Sudan
- » Swaziland
- » Uganda
- » Zambia
- » Zimbabwe



Group Picture of the Stakeholder workshop participants

At the end of the Regional Consultative Meeting, the 25th Year Anniversary of COMESA/LLPI was also celebrated. Apart from the Member States' delegates and participants, the Board of Directors of COMESA/LLPI, the first Director of COMESA/LLPI and all LLPI Staff were part of the celebration event.



Group Picture of the Stakeholder workshop participants



Dr. Robert Arunga and Mr. Zewdu Receiving Certificates from the ED



Prof. Mekonnen Hailemariam Receiving 2015 Best Employee Award from Mr. Wondu Legesse



Mrs. Aster Shiferaw Receiving 2015 Best Employee Award from Prof. Basaran



Mrs. Ejigayehu Kebede Receiving 2015 Best Employee Award from Prof. Ndirangu Kioni

COMESA/LLPI 29th Board of Directors Meeting Held

The COMESA/LLPI Board of Directors (BoD) Meeting was held on 18th - 19th November 2015 at the LLPI Board Room in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

During the two days Meeting, the BoD discussed and made top level decisions on various administrative and strategic issues.



Partial View of the Board of Directors Meeting



Mr. Wondu Legesse, Chairman of the BoD and Prof. M. Mwinyihija, Executive Director of COMESA/LLP

COMESA/LLPI and COMSec Jointly Organized Private Sector Workshops on the Establishment of a Regional Design Studio Held in Kigali, Rwanda

COMESA Leather and Leather Products Institute (COMESA/LLPI) and Commonwealth Secretariat (COMSec) jointly organized a private sector workshop on the establishment of a Regional Design Studio for leather footwear and leather goods was held at Chez Lando Hotel, Kigali, Rwanda from November 10 to 11, 2015.



The Workshop was attended by 24 participants drawn principally from the private sector from the State of Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda the Sudan, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, and few from partner organizations. It is to be recalled that similar workshop for public sector representatives, was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in September, 2015.

The Executive Director of COMESA/LLPI, Prof. Mwinyikione Mwinyihija and Mrs. Estella Aryada, Trade Advisor from Commonwealth Secretariat, in their welcoming address and opening statement, pointed out that enhancing the design capacity will have a great role to play in unlocking the

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The Executive Director of COMESA/LLPI Giving Opening Remarks

region's massive potential in the leather sector, through improving competitiveness and access to potential high value end markets.

The agenda of the workshop covered a range of very interesting topics related to the importance of design for the development of the leather industry. The need for a strong design and product development backing for competitiveness and access to the multifaceted and fast changing leather fashion industry were discussed. The two days meeting pointed out possible avenues for the establishment of regional design studio and also came up with beneficial recommendation which can positively impact the leather industries of the countries.



Group Picture Participants During the Workshop

The COMESA/LLPI Expert Team led by the Institute's Executive Director Prof. Mwinyihija Mwinyikione paid courtesy visit to H.E. Mr. Francois Kanimba, Minister of Trade and Industry of Rwanda, on November 13, 2015 and briefed the Honorable Minister on the workshop objectives and outputs. The team also took the opportunity to discuss on the COMESA/LLPI's facilitated Rwanda Leather Value Chain Strategy formulation activities and other programs under implementation.

The Experts Team, during its stay in Kigali, also met and discussed with the top management officials of the Gassibo Community Processing Center, Business Development Fund, Workforce Development Authority and National Industrial Research and Development Agency (NARDA) for enhanced collaborative activities to promote the development of the leather sector in Rwanda.

Stakeholder Workshop to Define Implementation Support Areas for Value Addition in the Leather Sector Held

Stakeholders' Workshop to Define Implementation Support Areas for Value Addition in the Leather Sector in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania was held on 4th – 5th November, 2015 in Hilton Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya.



Supporting Indian Trade and Investment for Africa (SITA) Project being implemented by the International Trade Centre (ITC) is a South-South trade and Investment Project covering countries: India, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. The leather component of ITC-SITA project is being implemented in collaboration with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa - Leather and Leather Products Institute (COMESA/LLPI).

The major objective of the workshop was to define implementation support for selected tanners in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda; and to validate the preliminary results of Rapid Tannery Assessment Report made during August - September 2015 in the three countries.

The Workshop was officially opened by a speech



Prof. Mwinyikione Mwinyihija, Making an Opening Speech on Behalf of the Secretary General of COMESA

of Mr. Sindiso Ngwenya, the Secretary General of COMESA, which was actually read by his representative Prof. Mwinyihija, Executive Director of COMESA/LLPI.

Various presentations were forwarded and discussed by participants. Some of the presentations are listed below:

- » Africa's Renaissance and Potential in the Leather Sector with Reflection to the Global Performance (Prof. Mwinyikione Mwinyihija, Executive Director of COMESA/LLPI);
- » Rapid Tannery Assessment Outputs and performance gap analysis and issues (Mr. Nicholas Mudungwe (COMESA/LLPI) and Mr. Hernan Manson (ITC))
- » Market Trends, options and product development possibilities (Simone Cipriani (ITC), Mimi Plange (MIMI PLANGE), Fashion designer, New York)
- » Impact Assessment Methodologies and Baseline: RISE, Lisa Barratt (ITC);
- » Trade Intelligence Systems and Services, Mr. Bastian Bill (ITC)

During the workshop, preliminary results based on key parameters like Management Capability, Overall Operations and Processing, Factory Premises, Raw Material Control, Workers Safety and Welfare, Environmental Impact, Quality Assurance and Testing and Gender Diversity have been presented per country basis and thoroughly discussed. The assessment results of individual tanneries are to be discussed with operators of the respective tanneries. Finally, support areas were identified in consultation with tannery operators and the next intervention will start very soon!

Workshop participants were drawn from public and private sectors of Kenya, Tanzania & Uganda; and COMESA/LLPI and ITC. A Fashion Designer called Mimi Plange from New York also attended the workshop.

USAID East Africa Trade and Investment Hub Made Visit to COMESA/LLPI

The USAID East Africa Trade and Investment Hub Team, comprising of Mrs. Kanini Mutoni and Mr. Fred Kongongo, paid a visit to COMESA/LLPI Headquarters, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 23rd October 2015.



The objective of the visit was to discuss on the possible collaborative activities between COMESA/LLPI and USAID East Africa Trade and Investment Hub.

Prof. Mwinyikione Mwinyihija, the Executive Director of COMESA/LLPI, welcomed the Team and expressed the Institute's appreciation for the interest that the Hub has shown to work with COMESA/LLPI. Prof. Mwinyihija gave a brief highlight on the Establishment, Mandate, Objectives, Member States, partner organizations, major accomplishments & challenges and future plans of COMESA/LLPI. He also made mention of the potential of the leather sector in the COMESA Region, the COMESA/LLPI's interventions to promote the development of the sector and the results so far achieved. The Executive Director also indicated the collaborative activities that the Institute is undertaking with regionally and globally renowned institutions including membership with International Council of Tanners (ICT) and IULTCS as well as MoUs signed with different institutions and organizations. The LLPI's Current activities were indicated as focusing on enhancing the productivity, competitiveness, trade and market access of SMEs in the leather sector with special attention to enterprises owned by women;

establishment of Regional Design Studio for leather footwear and leather goods; ISO Standards Compliance; Benchmarking programme, All Africa Leather Fair (AALF) participation of Member States, supporting leather industry incubators in the Region, Strengthening LLPI's ICT Unit and establishment of Revolving Fund scheme to assist SMEs with Equipment.

The Executive Director then reiterated the COMESA/LLPI's strong interest to undertake collaborative activities with the Hub, in furtherance of its endeavors to promote the development of the leather sector in the region and as a contribution to increased international co-operation.

The USAID East Africa Trade and Investment Hub is an organization working to boost trade and investment with and within East Africa. The goal of the Hub is to deepen regional integration, increase the competitiveness of selected regional agriculture value chains, promote two-way trade with the U.S. under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and facilitate investment and technology that drives trade growth intra-regionally and to global markets. The Hub's activities focus on the East African Community countries - Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda and also provide AGOA-related support in Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mauritius and the Seychelles.

Mrs. Kanini Mutoni, the Team Leader of USAID East Africa Trade and Investment Hub, confirmed the Hub's commitment to support the leather sector by focusing on investment and trade aspects, particularly on export and inter-regional trade. She also said that the Hub wants to work with LLPI and even expressed interest to participate in the then forthcoming Consultative Meeting of COMESA/LLPI.

The fruitful and thorough discussion culminated with the two parties (COMESA/LLPI and the USAID East Africa Trade and Investment Hub) agreeing to sign an MoU that will serve as an umbrella agreement to materialize their commitment for collaborative activities.



COTANCE completes 'The Future of European Leather' Conference Series

The leather industry's representative body to the European Commission, COTANCE, completed the series of four seminars on the future of European leather with an event in Glasgow on December 10. Three conferences in the series had already taken place, in Bucharest in April, Paris in June and Alcanena in October.

For the Glasgow event, the main theme was environmental management; one keynote presentation came from Tony Covington, emeritus professor of leather science at the University of Northampton, who spoke on the subject of how sustainable the leather industry is, while industry consultant Federico Brugnoli gave an account of the detailed work he has done to determine the carbon footprint of leather.

COTANCE will bring the series to a conclusion with a final wrap-up conference in Brussels on February 2, 2016. It has arranged the series in partnership with trade union organisation industriAll, which it refers to as its social partner.

At the Brussels conference, the social partners will present what they have called a joint manifesto with conclusions and recommendations derived from the 2015 seminars. A high-level audience is expected with major stakeholders from the industry and officials from the European Community institutions.

Source: <http://leatherbiz.com/fullitem.aspx?id=140286>

Leather Companies to Show Off Savoir-faire at Paris Event

Eleven companies from all over France will take part in a two-day business encounter in Paris at the start of December aimed at showing designers and buyers some of the savoir-faire that goes into making leather and finished leather products.

The event, called Dans la Peau du Cuir (In Leather's Skin), will take place on December 1 and 2 at the Maison du Limousin in the rue de Caumartin in Paris, near the church of La Madeleine. The organisers have said it will be a showcase for the "dynamism and capacity for innovation" of the leather supply chain in France.

Companies taking part will include Millau-based producer of gloving leathers Tanneries Pechdo, Maison Fabre, which is one of France's most famous manufacturers of gloves, Paskap, a children's footwear brand from the south-west and Daguet, a specialist producer of belts from near Limoges.

Source: <http://leatherbiz.com/fullitem.aspx?id=139927>

Argentina: Tanners Under Scrutiny for Ignoring Local Customers

A war of words between Argentina's tanners and the country's leathergoods manufacturers shows few signs of abating.

Leathergoods industry representatives have successfully petitioned the government to investigate tanners over poor availability of finished leather in the local market. The finished product companies claim that tanners are exporting too much leather to customers overseas, leaving them unable to fulfil orders for handbags and other value-add items.

According to leathergoods industry representatives, tanners are taking advantage of hide prices that, they say, have fallen by 60% since the end of last year. They claim tanners are happy to ship finished leather to customers overseas rather than make it available to local producers, who, again according to representatives of the leathergoods companies, are still paying the same price as before and are unable to source all the leather they need from Argentinean tanneries and have resorted to importing leather from Brazil.

The suggestion is that Argentina's tanners want to avoid having to share the benefit of lower hide prices with customers in the local market.

Source: <http://leatherbiz.com/fullitem.aspx?id=139841>

BASF to Invest €6bn in Ludwigshafen Ahead of "sharp" Increase in Workers Retiring

Leather chemicals manufacturer BASF has issued a statement outlining plans it has for the future of its headquarters in Ludwigshafen, Germany.

The company will invest €6 billion at the site between next year and 2020, maintaining levels of research and development work in Ludwigshafen, but also making provision for the "great challenge" the company is preparing to face because of demographics.

"By 2020, one in two employees at the Ludwigshafen site will be older than 50," BASF has said in a statement. "From 2018, the number of employees retiring will start to increase sharply."

To ensure that it can meet its demand for skilled labour, the company went on to say that it will use some of the €6 billion to offer vocational training and flexible qualification programmes to existing employees as part of an effort to carry out "effective knowledge transfer" between more experienced employees who are preparing to retire and less experienced people who will remain.

Source: <http://leatherbiz.com/fullitem.aspx?id=139817>

Canada and Mexico Ready to Retaliate Over US Labels of Origin

The US Hide, Skin and Leather Association (USHSLA) has warned once again that a trade dispute involving the US, Canada and Mexico could have consequences for the hides and skins sector.

In May, USHSLA gave details of a dispute at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in which Mexico and Canada have protested about Country of Origin Labelling (COOL) demands imposed on them by the US with regard to beef and pork products. Since 2002, meat companies must make a distinction between meat from cattle born, raised and slaughtered in the US and meat from cattle that may have moved across the US's borders with Canada and Mexico. All three countries share the North American Free Trade Agreement.

On December 8, the WTO approved Mexico and Canada's petition to institute targeted retaliatory tariffs against the US, with the measures possibly coming into force before the end of 2015. USHSLA issued a statement saying these tariffs are "an inevitability" unless the US Congress repeals the 2002 COOL laws.

USHSLA president, Stephen Sothmann, said in the statement that he remains hopeful the US Congress will react in time to

ward off retaliation. One chamber, the House of Representatives, has already passed a repeal of COOL but the other, the Senate, has taken no action so far. He said that retaliatory action by Canada and Mexico would be "very politically targeted, and heavily weighted towards agricultural products" and warned of "an outside chance" that hides, skins and wet blue products could be caught up in this select targeting.

Depending on market conditions, anywhere from 500,000 to 1.5 million head of cattle are imported into the US from Canada and Mexico each year. For pigs, the number is between 1 million and 2 million, mainly imported from Canada.

Source: <http://leatherbiz.com/fullitem.aspx?id=140261>

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Chrome VI Cannot be Part of “Cheap and Easy” Chemical Test

The parent company of Timberland, VF Corporation, is moving ahead with plans to roll out a cheap and simple test for restricted substances in its supply chain, but has confirmed to World Leather that the test cannot check for hexavalent chromium (chrome VI) in leather or finished leather products.

Speaking at the 2015 Planet Textiles conference in Shanghai on October 14, VF's global vice-president for responsible sourcing, Sean Cady, said his company had reached the conclusion that, after 15 years, it would be difficult to say the industry has been successful in using restricted substance lists to keep potentially hazardous chemicals out the supply chain.

To be able to engage better with its supply chain partners, he said VF had worked out a way to help them “make better choices” about the chemicals they use in production. “It has to be simple, scaleable and cost-effective,” he explained. “We want manufacturers to be able to screen the chemicals they are using simply by using a testing strip like the ones everyone used in high school to measure the pH of chemicals, with the strip turning green if the chemicals are good to use and turning red if there is any restricted substance in there.”

It has already rolled the idea out in ten countries where it has factories of its own or manufacturing partners and will continue to extend its use. It makes it possible for companies to screen for more than 400 substances in one screening for a cost of less than \$50.

Later, however, Mr Cady told World Leather that the idea, called CHEM-IQ, will not help Timberland suppliers check for chromium VI in leather. He said: “The complexity is all in the back of the strip and it is working for thousands of chemicals. In 2014, we used it to test 2,300 unique chemicals. Unfortunately, though, chrome and other metals are just too difficult.”

Source: <http://leatherbiz.com/fullitem.aspx?id=139752>

“Leather Is My Job” Project to Run Again in 2016

A project called ‘Leather is My Job’, aimed at improving the European tanning industry's image in the eyes of jobseekers, is to receive a new lease of life in 2016. The project ran in 2014 and came to a conclusion at an event in Bucharest in October that year.

COTANCE, the representative body of the leather industry in the European Union (EU), led the project, working jointly with trade union organisation industriAll. The initiative had the support of the European Commission.

A follow-up project will roll out throughout 2016 and half of 2017, COTANCE announced in December, mainly focusing on

“enlarging and deepening” the results achieved already.

“Feedback from the industry in Europe to our first project, both from workers and businesses, was so encouraging that we did not hesitate to pursue our objectives further in the field,” said the EU social partners at a kick-off meeting.

They also reported positive reactions from extra-EU sources and from leather value chain partners. “This is highly encouraging,” said Luc Triangle, deputy general secretary of industriAll, “as it denotes that we are on the right track in the social dialogue in our sector.”

COTANCE's secretary general, Gustavo Gonzalez-Quijano, added: “I am very pleased that through this initiative, Luc and I bring Europe closer to the leather businesses and workers who many not always see all that is done at EU level in support of the industry.”

This second ‘Leather is my Job’ project will bring together industry associations and trade unions from France, Germany, Bulgaria, Spain, Portugal, the UK, Romania, Sweden, Italy, Austria and Hungary.

It will include open-days in tanneries, visits to schools, contact with employment agencies, participation in job fairs and so on. A meeting of all project partners will take place in March 2016 to look at national initiatives and decide on the definitive activities to be performed.

There will be a particular effort to reach out organisations that have not yet taken part in the initiative, particularly in central and eastern Europe.

Source: <http://leatherbiz.com/fullitem.aspx?id=140316>

Second-hand Tanning Machines Holding Back Turkish Technology Providers

The head of a Turkish tanning machinery manufacturer has said he and his peers are being held back from developing a bigger share of the global market because of the large volumes of second-hand machinery becoming available to tanners in emerging markets from tanneries in Europe that have closed down.

Ersan Kursesi, owner of the Ermaksan Machinery Company, has said Turkish manufacturers, including Vardar, Ozdersan and his own company, have the capability to manufacture classical fleshing, shaving and buffing machines, as well as larger machines for whole hides, and are receiving orders from emerging markets such as Algeria and Bangladesh.

“But we are being held back by the availability of reconditioned old machines from tanneries in Europe that have closed down,” he said in recent comments. “Their low prices are reducing our capacity.” He said the only consolation is that this phenomenon is also affecting the Italian manufacturers that are the Turkish companies' competitors.

Source: <http://leatherbiz.com/fullitem.aspx?id=140116>

ICHSLTA Predicts More Hides by 2025, But Warns About Quality



The president of the International Council of Hide, Skins and Leather Trade Associations (ICHSLTA), Nick Winters, has said hide availability, globally, is likely to grow in the course of the next ten years, but that the additional volume of raw material will come from origins other than Europe.

Speaking at the third COTANCE conference and on the future of leather in Alcanena, Portugal, on October 27, Mr Winters projected that growth in world population and an increase in the numbers of people in developing economies who are entering the middle classes and are, therefore, able to afford to eat meat more frequently, will push beef production 22% higher between now and 2025. ICHSLTA's estimates are that global cattle slaughter is around 290 million head per year at the moment but will reach 430 million head in 2025.

"The new middle class in China is 65 million people per year, the equivalent of a new France each year, and they want to eat more beef and consume more leather," Mr Winters said. "However, meat consumption in Europe is projected to fall slightly so the extra hides will be from developing countries and will not offer the same quality of raw material as European hides do."

He said he was confident European tanners would still make the best leather in the world, even from these hides. "European tanners have the experience, the technology and the savoir-faire, the fantasy side," he said. "They can make amazing leather, even from mediocre hides."

Source: <http://leatherbiz.com/fullitem.aspx?id=139890>

Italian Shoe Manufacturers Call for Backing on China Anti-dumping Status

The chair of Italian footwear manufacturers association has said she is "extremely concerned" about possible recognition of China's market economy status and the effects it will have in Europe.

"We have to fully comprehend the possible consequences of this measure and harm it could to the Italian and European manufacturing industry," said Annarita Pilotti, chairman of Assocalzaturifici. "Our sector, in total accord with Confindustria, calls on the government to fight alongside us to ensure that our business enterprises are able to compete on a level playing field, in a global framework that is fair, competitive and transparent."

"China's accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 2001 marked a major milestone for world trade. Many of us had great expectations with regard to China, imagining that the country would become increasingly integrated into the global economy and that it would prove easier to access to one of the world's fastest growing markets. But these expectations still have to be fulfilled."

As China's status as a market economy has not been recognised by the WTO, the US, Europe and Japan have imposed anti-dumping duties on Chinese imports, such as shoes, they deemed were unfairly cheap and could affect domestic manufacturing.

China has suggested it should automatically be granted Market Economy Status (MES) in December 2016.

"There a debate under way in Brussels to decide whether or not to formally recognise China as a market economy. It is therefore essential that we make our voice heard now, in the interest of all the many companies which, in the event of China being granted MES, would be in danger of going out of business."

"Granting China market economy status would make it much more difficult for the EU to defend its own industrial capacity, with potentially serious repercussions and a negative impact on companies and employment."

Source: <http://leatherbiz.com/fullitem.aspx?id=139904>

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Shoe Orders Abound as Nicaragua Becomes Supplier for Whole Region

Nicaragua's national leather and footwear association has said an increase in the quality of the shoes local manufacturers are producing is bringing buyers from other countries to the Central American country.

In recent comments to local media, association president, Alejandro Delgado, said important buyers from other countries in the region visited Nicaragua in late November to place orders totalling more than 400,000 pairs.

He explained that the idea of giving children from low-income families good-quality, government-supplied shoes as a way of encouraging them to attend lessons was spreading in Central America. One of the first countries to make this move, boosting the domestic footwear and leather industries as well as literacy and numeracy rates among children, was Argentina in 2009, with Peru and El Salvador among the countries that followed suit. Nicaragua was quick to emulate the idea and, more than most, has continued its school shoes programme.

Mr Delgado said the large volume of orders Nicaraguan footwear manufacturers received in November were from the governments of two neighbouring countries who want to put a similar programme in place for children there, but who lack the domestic production capacity to be able to put it into effect without outside help.

He said his organisation had set up meetings with around 150 small and medium-sized producers in Nicaragua to discuss how best to meet growing demand, pointing out that domestic producers were already committed to supplying their own government with around 600,000 pairs of school shoes next year. He pointed out that the buyers from neighbouring countries were asking for quick turnaround times and that his member companies had to be careful not to promise too much. "We will only take on what we know we can deliver," he said, "but we are optimistic and we think this is good news. Nicaragua is becoming the supplier of good-quality school shoes for the whole region and our entire leather and footwear sector is benefitting."

In total, he said Nicaragua's footwear industry produced around 6.5 million pairs in 2014 and that the figure for 2015 is likely to be 8 million

Source: <http://leatherbiz.com/fullitem.aspx?id=140155>

Spain Needs New Footwear Workers to Meet European Demand

The president of Valencia footwear association Avelal, Marián Cano, has said the footwear industry in the region, the most important in Spain for footwear production, has made it clear to the Spanish government that it hopes a formal

apprenticeship programme will be one of the outcomes of the country's general elections on December 20.

In recent comments to specialist media in Spain, Ms Cano said



that footwear manufacturers want to have in place a practical, hands-on apprenticeship programme in which young people can learn the trade quickly. She said that for young people to come into the footwear production industry, they need to pick up know-how that they can only learn on the factory floor (as opposed to in a classroom).

A new generation of people with footwear production skills is necessary, she said, because her association receives enquiries "every day" from European brands that want to set up production in Spain as part of a strategy of bringing shoe manufacturing closer to target sales markets once more.

Source: <http://leatherbiz.com/fullitem.aspx?id=140339>

Local Leather Only as Co-operative Launches its Own Athletic Shoe

A footwear manufacturer in north-eastern Argentina launched its first own-brand product at the end of September 2015 after 11 years of making shoes for other companies.

Corrientes-based Utrasa, a co-operative formed as an employee buy-out in 2004 when footwear producer Gatic closed down, has now launched its first own-brand shoe. As part of a commitment to using only Argentinean raw materials, the uppers are of locally produced leather, while the sole is PVC.

Industry minister for the province of Corrientes, Ignacio Osella, was present at the launch and said of the shoe: "It's really a fantastic product, especially in a market that is so competitive, so demanding and so hard to get into." He said Utrasa was likely to distribute its own-brand footwear in the wider north-eastern region to begin with.

For her part, Utrasa's president, Ana María Galarza, said at the time of the launch that the new leather shoe is the fruit of "11 years of sacrifice and hard work". She added: "We've

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always worked for other companies, but making shoes under our own brand was always our dream."

She paid tribute to the support Utrasa has received from the provincial government; the co-operative designed and made its latest product with the support of a special industrial development fund. Ms Galarza also said the Corrientes provincial government had been supportive of Utrasa's earliest attempts to keep its people working. "Everything looked bleak," she said, "but we had 27,000 pairs of canvas shoes and the provincial ministry for education bought them all to distribute among the children in local schools."

Source: <http://leatherbiz.com/fullitem.aspx?id=139629>

Stahl CEO Calls on Tanners to Embrace New Technology



Image shows Huub van Beijeren (left) in conversation at the Stahl event with Professor Ferdinand Dudenhöffer of the university of Duisburg-Essen.

At the end of an event to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary leather chemical manufacturer Stahl's move to its current headquarters in Waalwijk in the Netherlands, and the opening of a new centre of excellence for the automotive industry, chief executive, Huub van Beijeren, told World Leather he wanted the companies that buy leather to hear directly about the innovations his company is working on.

"We want automotive companies and luxury brands to find out about what we are doing he said and that's what we hope to achieve with this new centre of excellence," he said.

Mr van Beijeren said tanners will be able to benefit from visiting the centre too, but he said he sometimes has the impression tanners are reticent about taking on new technologies. "What they've always done for their automotive customers works," he said, "so why change? They fear that if they change, the new technology may not work as well as the old."

Source: <http://leatherbiz.com/fullitem.aspx?id=139589>

Leather Production Without Water is Possible "in Principle", Professor Says

Professor Tony Covington, emeritus professor of leather science at the University of Northampton, has said he has high hopes for the use of bead technology in tanning.

Xeros Technology Group, a UK start-up that has developed a patented polymer bead system that it claims can save large volumes of water in leather production, has been working with the university since the start of 2014 to adapt its technology, which it says works well in dry cleaning applications, to leather production.

In May 2015, Xeros entered into a partnership with major leather chemicals manufacturer Lanxess, saying it hoped this would lead to its being able to use its bead technology to process high-quality leather "on a commercial and scaleable basis".

Professor Covington brought the subject up at the fourth "Future of European Leather" conference, organised by COTANCE in Glasgow on December 10. He said that he was restricted in what he could tell delegates by legal agreements and did not mention any technology provider by name, but went on to refer to bead technology as "a new development in which water is replaced by a solid medium in a very different approach" to leather manufacture.

"The delivery mechanism for leather chemicals [polymer beads instead of water] is different," he explained, "and that opens up new possibilities. For example, it will make it much easier for tanners to use reactive dyes.

He went on to say that for new ideas to be a success in the leather industry, they have to be compatible with what tanners can reasonably be expected to do in their existing production set-ups, but he insisted that bead technology is "practical and developable".

One tanner in the audience, Colin Wade, the managing director of Andrew Muirhead & Son, asked the professor if he really thought it would be possible for companies to replace all water throughout the whole of the leather production process.

Professor Covington answered: "In principle, the possibility is there."

Source: <http://leatherbiz.com/fullitem.aspx?id=140351>

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About Us

ABOUT COMESA-LLPI

The formation of the Leather and Leather Products Institute (LLPI) was approved and Chartered by the former Preferential Trade Area (PTA) for Eastern and Southern African States (forerunner of COMESA) in 1988 to fulfill its industrial objective to "support and develop the leather industries of the COMESA region". It was then established by the signing of the Charter by member Heads of States on 23rd November 1990.

LLPI Vision:

A Competent Leather and Leather Products Centre of Excellence for Regional and Global Competitiveness.

LLPI Mission:

To Promote and Develop the Regional Leather Sector Through Research and Development, Capacity Building, and International Cooperation & Trade for Enhanced Productivity.



Leather for Health, Wealth and Luxury!

Address

For more information about LLPI, please contact:

COMESA—Leather and Leather Products Institute (COMESA/LLPI)

P.O. Box 2358 Code 1110

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Phone: 251—11-4390228/4391319/4390327/4390928

Fax: 251-11-4390900

E-mail: comesa.llpi@ethionet.et

executive.director@comesa-llpi.int

Website: www.comesa-llpi.int