

## Meeting Notes – Responsible Leather Stakeholder Meeting

Monday, June 19, 2017

### Meeting Agenda:

1. News, Info, Updates
2. Sauer Report – Traceability in the Leather Supply Chain
3. Discussion on the "Two-Prong" Approach
4. Initial Task Groups
5. Update on Work Plan
6. Funding Request

Introduction to Responsible Leather and Textile Exchange

GTW Control Panel

Meeting Notes & Recording

Chatham House Rule

Anti-Trust Declaration

### 1.) News, Info, & Updates

- Continued issues around slaughterhouses in India
  - 15 tanneries shut down in the city of Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh due to pollution
    - expecting more impacts coming from the recent and strong stance the Indian government is taking against illegal slaughterhouses
    - As of now, the ban is ONLY in the state of Uttar Pradesh, other states are not following because it is not mandatory
    - Brands have been approached by PETA on this topic
- Hanna Denes and Ashley Gill at OutDoor Show in Friedrichshafen - meeting with companies about wool, down, and leather
- Anne Gillespie will be at Outdoor Retailer in Salt Lake City - week of July 24th
- Looking to attend the GRSB in June in Denver

### 2.) Sauer Report – Traceability in the Leather Supply Chain

- The report showed that people are more interested in labels that focus on collective values vs individual, these included:
  - destruction of tropical rainforest
  - increase in greenhouse gases from livestock

- animal welfare
- Largest challenge in traceability is that the leather industry is divided in opinion and leadership on the topic of traceability
- A solution is for the driver of traceability to put commercial pressure at the TOP, and go down the supply chain
  - This helps us know that we are on the right track because we are a top-down initiative (not grassroots)
  - Many stakeholders agree
- Presents successful existing systems for beef, many of which go all the way to leather
  - good ones in Europe, such as [Buitelaar International](#)
- DNA labelling, barcode, stamping, plastic tags, digital tracking chips are most commonly used for traceability
  - LWG is also working on DNA traceability
- The report summarizes main traceability technologies: price, advantages, and disadvantages of each
  - Textile Exchange is creating a snapshot of this report to share, will be available at <https://responsibleleather.org/resources/documents/> when ready!

### 3.) Discussion on the "Two-Prong" Approach

- Would like to create an “Industry Support and Development Program” for smaller suppliers to meet the standard
  - Still in the concept phase
  - Would include training, awareness, financial support, etc.
- Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN) has started with a support program for their Cattle Standard
  - serves as a good example for showing the need for this type of program
- “Two Prong” because on one side we would have the standard, and on other side would be the Industry Support and Development Program
- TE has limited capacity as far as our reach and areas of expertise, so we would partner with other organizations to bring all of our work together and set a benchmark for best practices

### 4.) Task Groups

- Will not have a formalized IWG until we have the mandate to move forward with the standard
- Will start with Task Groups to organize the stakeholder engagement

What is a task group?

- Capitalizes on expertise and knowledge in the group
- Meets outside of the IWG schedule
- Focused on a single issue at a time
- Identifies issues and activities related to the topic
- Discusses options and creates proposals to present to the full IWG
- Does not make decisions
- Time limited
- Supported by TE
- Can be led by TE or someone else

a.) **Species Inclusion Task Group**

- Should a standard cover one or more species? Cattle, sheep, pigs, etc.
- If multiple species, what should be excluded and what will be the framework or structure?
- How could the standard be designed for multiple scopes?
- Which existing species specific standards would we recognize?
- What are the options to present to the IWG?
  
- When taking a look at the current market share of leather, bovine is #1, with sheep coming in at #2
- Single Species
  - Pros: easier
  - Cons: limits the applications of the standard
- Multiple Species
  - Pros: Can cater for a wider range of needs from brands / Supports economies of scale post farm gate
  - Cons: Increased complexity / Increased development costs
- Where do we draw the line?
  - Farming systems?
  - Fur industry?
  - Exotic leathers?
- Exploring solutions
  - see diagram, page #22 in slide deck

#### a.) Social Task Group

- Should we include social?
- What issues would we address?
- Which stages would it apply to?
- Which existing standards would we recognize?
  - Does not have to be comprehensive, just a first look
- How would it fit into the standard?
- What are the options to present to the IWG?

#### Steps:

- 1.) Look at pros and cons
- 2.) What Issues do we address?
  - a.) Are they critical, important, or desired? Where do they fit in with this initiative?
- 3.) What stages would it apply to?
  - a.) Farming, Slaughter, Tanning, Manufacturing?
- 4.) Which existing standards would we recognize, and where would they apply?
- 5.) How would we fit it into the standard?
  - a.) Optional or mandatory?
  - b.) Pass/Fail or scoring system?
  - c.) Do we start small with a few requirements and expand over time?
- 6.) What are our options for presenting to the IWG?
  - a.) recommendations to the working group to help inform us all as we decide on the final scope and structure of the standard

#### 5.) Update on Work Plan

- This year's goal is to identify the work we are going to move forward with in 2018
- Standard and possible support program
- 150 names in our working group, getting contacts every day
  - Looking for more outside of apparel industry (pre-slaughter, food/meat, automotive, etc)
- Mapping out issues and existing standards to identify the potential scope of our standard
  - Looked at Issues and Standards excel file
- Key Stakeholder Meeting in Ottawa, on the radar for Fall 2017
  - Also a stakeholder meeting at Textile Exchange Annual Conference in October

## 6.) Funding Request

### Closing & Action Items

- Permission to have your name posted on the website
- Stakeholder suggestions
- Sign up for task groups (or suggest people to invite)
- Let us know if you can give us some funding support
- Meeting Feedback Survey

### Q&A Summary:

**Q:** Is a standard the end goal? Or are other options on the table?

**A:** Other options are being looked at and will be discussed further, such as pass/fail, continuous improvement model, etc.

**Q:** Are you also going to map AW legislation? Is the leather value chain going to be the driver of AW independently from the food industry?

**A:** A huge task and we would love to jump on board with someone who has already done that (such as animal welfare groups). Countries, and even states within them, have varying levels of legislation, so we need to do an analysis of what areas are safe to source from and what areas need more attention. Not going to be a big project for us, unless we get the funding to do so. Some cross-over with LWG work.

**Q:** How will TE approach engagement with food industry partners e.g. food brands + GRSB. Is the aim to bring them to these calls or ask them to provide information on their initiatives at this stage?

**A:** Really looking at how we can bring GRSB to the table. Difficult to get in contact with them - going to the GRSB meeting in the US is one way to approach them, also through other organization contacts. Also looking to get to food industry through some brands on our stakeholder list. Any contacts are welcome!

[worldanimalprotection.org](http://worldanimalprotection.org) – a good resource for animal welfare legislation comparisons