

Responsible Leather Initiative Meeting

Tuesday, February 6th, 2017

Agenda:

1. News & Updates
2. 2017 Work Plan Review
3. Introduction to the Responsible Business Alliance: *Carlos Busquets, Director of Public Policy*
4. Putting Together the Big Picture
 - a. Global Roundtable for Sustainable Leather (concept)
 - b. Stakeholders
 - c. What we need to get things done

1. News & Updates

- October 2017: Textile Exchange Textile Sustainability Conference
 - Held a small in-person meeting for the Responsible Leather Initiative
- December 2017: CRSB (Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef) launches standard
 - Anne Gillespie and Stuart Adams attended the launch event and met with leadership of GRSB
- January 2018: Smart Agri-Food Super Cluster
 - Multi-stakeholder group organized to seek funding from Canadian government and take best practices in Canadian farming technology and apply them to other industries
 - Anne Gillespie and Stuart Adams invited to speak at event
- Report from World Economic Forum
 - Some insights on environmental risks, rises in CO2 emissions and loss of biodiversity – keeps speaking to the theme of our work
- Due Diligence Leather Project
 - [https://oiraproject.eu/en/oiratools?text=&field_sector\[222\]=222&field_sector\[223\]=223](https://oiraproject.eu/en/oiratools?text=&field_sector[222]=222&field_sector[223]=223)
 - <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/file/28031/download?token=gTPHUAfW>
- Moving forward and deepening our relationship with WWF
 - Anne in discussions with Laila Petrie from WWF
 - Laila also leads textile work streams with SAC
- GRSB adding a 6th constituency to their roundtable which will allow for membership from “external initiatives” including leather and possibly others such as dairy, soy, etc.
 - This is where we may fit in and be a part of the GRSB with our “roundtable” and tie in our work with theirs; become voting members, be part of the board of directors, etc.
- 2018 Industry Events
 - **Let us know if you have any events to add!**
 - U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (USRSB) General Assembly Meeting May 1-3, 2018 in Oklahoma City, OK. Everyone is welcome. feel free to reach out to amcdonald@beef.org

Questions/Comments:

- **Q:** Has anyone seen good methodologies for assigning share of impact from animals (GHG or Soy or other) between Leather and Meat?
 - Might want to look at publications via IWTO, hence sheep, hence wool vs meat; they advocate a protein % based distribution of meat vs wool.
 - In the PEF exercise of the EU, the allocation given to hides on hides is 0,25% or so, different for sheep and goats.
 - If anyone else has input/leads on methodologies for assigning share of impact from animals between meat and leather, please let us know at ResponsibleLeather@TextileExchange.org

2. 2017 Work Plan Review

- Need to do more work on decision making strategy, choosing scopes, and identifying a solution framework
 - We have a lot of insights into different ways we can tackle the issues
- Review of primary goals/solution framework exercise
- Survey results and discussion
 - Keep an eye out for simplified, revised survey

Questions/Comments:

- **Q:** What is the exact difference between the two primary goals (1 and 2)? Don't you need a system for goal 1 as well? (drive industry change vs. make a safer supply)
 - **A:** If we want to drive industry change, then might just do a Roundtable (RT), with the option to *later* develop a verification tool/benchmark. But if there is an immediate need to make a safer supply, then we will start working on the verification tool/benchmark.
- **Q:** You prefer to create a “permanent” RT, but the survey shows that the brands would like to claim a standard because making a claim is so important. Why aren't you thinking of it as a “temporary” RT?
 - **A:** Don't see it as an either or, but the permanent RT would act as a forum to do continuous work, but doesn't mean that we won't develop a standard. The RT gives us a way to do this continuous work, as well as to be a part of the GRSB and capitalize on the incredible amount of stakeholder engagement.
 - **Q:** How will we make a change on the ground? Still not clear on what the RT will focus on and what the benefits are.

Comment: *I think it's confusing speaking about standards. You rather mean "Protocol". A standard, e.g. ISO, would be a good thing if it is at all possible.*

- We are being careful to not use the term 'standard' in our communications
- In-person meeting:
 - Need suggestions on when and where
 - *we should review the options of bolting into one of the conferences highlighted, diaries soon get blocked out with more peripheral meetings taking advantage of key people being in one place - you need to earmark dates quickly*

- June @ OutDoor, but it might be too late and a bit off the beaten track

3. Introduction to the Responsible Business Alliance: Carlos Busquets, Director of Public Policy

History of the RBA:

- Founded in 2004 as the Electronics Industry Citizenship Coalition
- In 2013, members felt the organization should be upgraded; added professional staff, now about 30+ people
- Based around a group of member companies coming together to apply due diligence along their supply chains; risk assessment tools and robust audit program
- Expanded to bring in other sectors (Automotive, large retailers, etc.)

3 large scale initiatives: Responsible Mineral Initiative (RMI), Responsible Labor Initiative (RLI), Responsible Factory Initiative (RFI)

Responsible Labor Initiative (RLI) address forced labor and trafficking. EICC always had in code of conduct that prohibited forced labor and audited it, but eventually found significant issues in Malaysia for electronics. This led to serious changes in the audit program.

- Launched June 2017
- Multi-industry, multi-stakeholder initiative
- End-to-end ethical recruitment due diligence
- Primary focus on forced labor in supply chains
- Based on leading Responsible Business Alliance standards and programs
- The RLI has a set of due diligence tools to apply to your supply chain to address issues of forced labour, etc.

Responsible Mineral Initiative (RMI) and Leather:

1. Automotive membership interest in leather.
2. Sensing & prioritization research:
 - a. Material risk profiles on materiality, social, environmental and governance risks and engagement opportunities;
 - b. Risk profile on leather;
 - c. Publication expected by March 2018.
3. RMI identifies opportunities to support / leverage existing initiatives on raw materials.

4. Putting Together the Big Picture

Global Roundtable for Responsible Leather (GRRL) - Concept

Mission

Advance continuous improvement in sustainability of the global leather (and beef) value chains through leadership, science and multi-stakeholder engagement and collaboration.

Vision

We envision a world in which all aspects of the leather value chain are environmentally sound, socially responsible and economically viable.

The Roundtable will be:

- A platform for stakeholders in the leather industry to engage with each other, share information, and identify common challenges and opportunities.
- A common voice that represents the interests of the leather stakeholders and that can work with other stakeholders, including the beef/cattle industry.
- A structure for interacting with other organizations and government bodies.
- A forum to agree on priority issues and desired solutions, with the opportunity to take actions

Roundtable Activities:

May include but are not restricted to:

- Develop a plan to create a verification system that will allow leather brands to send a clear signal to their supply chains, and that will ultimately drive positive industry transformation.
- Convening virtual and in-person meetings to share information and perspectives from the beef and leather supply chains.
- Identify existing opportunities for joint action (e.g.: adding leather users to pilot programs being run for beef, signing onto deforestation-free protocols).
- Combining knowledge and expertise of the stakeholders to map out existing projects and initiatives: put them into a common framework that both the beef and leather industries can use.
- Outreach and education to leather brands to understand the issues, develop alignment among their sourcing policies, and to participate in and financially support the Roundtable.

2018 Initial Draft of Global Roundtable for Responsible Leather (relationship and activity map)

see slide #42

- This is a visual map of what the roundtable would look like and how a tool would come out of it
- Tying ourselves into work being done by other organizations; giving feedback and input

TE Asks: Please let us know if you can help out in any of the below points!

- Financial Support
- Expertise: a specific time commitment on a given topic or job
- Leadership: commitment to lead a task group
- Volunteer: contribute time to take on a given job or do research
- Patience!

Questions/Comments:

- **Comment:** The voice of the industry at international level is the International Council of Tanners, The International Council of Hides Skins & Leather Associations, the International Union of Leather Technologists Societies, the Global Leather Coordination Committee.
- **Comment:** We should ensure we look at a flexible global approach and not one person that just interfaces with the “better” end of the industry.

Upcoming Stakeholder Meeting Dates (Tentative – formal invites will be sent)

- Monday, February 26th – 10 AM EST / 4 PM CET
- Tuesday, March 20th – 10 AM EST / 4 PM CET