

Partnerships for innovation and policy action for sustainable leather

A LINEAPELLE INTERNATIONAL LEATHER FAIR OFFICIAL SIDE EVENT

23 September 2025

14:30-17:00 (CEST)

Fiera Milano Rho

LINEAPELLE Talks Area, Hall 2 (Stand U01 Z02) and ONLINE

As trade regulations evolve, it is important that the leather sector keeps up by innovating and adapting. This applies to traceability of hide origins, to increasing circularity by making use of by-products, to ensuring socio-economic needs of workers can be met. These innovations require industry uptake, enabled by standards and policy at national and international levels.

This [official side event](#), taking place in the context of the LINEAPELLE International Leather Fair, promotes a bottom-up, evidence-based exchange by showcasing tangible innovations from leather-producing regions. It aims to demonstrate how the leather industry can harness innovation to adapt to growing sustainability demands and ensure waste is transformed into valuable products with immediate market potential, improving circularity and industry resilience. Supported by responsible practices to address social and environmental risks at the tannery level, these innovations can ensure a sustainable future for the sector and continued participation in international trade.

Building on empirical cases, this [official side event](#) will explore enabling practices, policies and standards from the perspective of both regulatory bodies and industry. The discussions will focus on practical experiences and strategies for unlocking the full potential of the leather sector and promoting circularity across the leather value chain.

Panel 1: 14:30 – 15:40 (CEST)

Innovative solutions in action from the [Sustainable Manufacturing and Environmental Pollution \(SMEP\) Programme](#)

Moderator: Ms. Elzette Henshilwood, Technical Project and Relationship Manager, SouthSouthNorth (SSN)

- **Mr. Adeel Younas**, Project Lead, WWF Pakistan, [Traceability, Cleaner Production and Circularity](#)
 - Piloting a traceability solution for Pakistan as well as exploring waste valorisation methods for utilising fleshings for water-resistant surfactant and applying a locally

tested and produced enzymatic solution to reduce the reliance on kerosene oil during the degreasing process

- **Dr. Ebenezer Laryea**, Reader (Professor) in Sustainable Development Law, Aston University; Project Director, [Leathertrace \(Bangladesh\)](#)
 - Developing and piloting a digital e-traceability system for Bangladesh leather industry
- **Dr. Saravanan Palanivel**, Chief Scientist, Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR)-India-Central Leather Research Institute (CLRI), [Green Tannery Initiative, Ethiopia](#)
 - Replacing sodium sulfide with enzymatic solutions during the unhairing process in the Ethiopian context and piloting various valorisation approaches to transform fleshing waste into value-added products such as biofertiliser
- **Ms. Sara Petersson**, Global Partnerships Programme Manager, Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI), United Kingdom
 - Improving environmental and social conditions in [Savar Tannery Industrial Estate, Bangladesh](#)
- **Q&A**

Break: 15:40 – 15:50 (CEST)

Panel 2: 15:50 – 17:00 (CEST)

Policy to support uptake of innovative solutions for traceability and waste valorisation approaches

Moderator: Ms. Chloé Mukai, Head, Ethical Fashion Initiative, International Trade Centre (ITC)

- **Mr. Lorenzo Formenti**, Consultant, UN Trade and Development
- **Mr. Mahesh Sugathan**, Independent Expert, Sustainable Trade
 - Trade-related challenges and opportunities for a circular leather industry
- **Mr. Norbert Niedzwiedz**, Senior Standards Manager, Leather Working Group (LWG)
 - Uptake of innovative circular solutions into standards
- **Ms. Deborah Taylor**, Managing Director, Sustainable Leather Foundation (SLF)
 - Innovating for better awareness and training in the tannery workforce
- **Q&A**

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