



Sustainable Leather Foundation

Biodegradability Collaboration Hub

29 March 2021

Discussion

- It was felt that the communication of the term's biodegradability and compostability for leather was not clear.
- It was explained that the current leather-only biodegradability test is ISO 20136, the other tests currently used for leather are the plastics tests, e.g., ISO 20200.
- There is no ISO specification for compostability of leather (specifically) and that the leather test makes use of the specification for compostable plastic, as it is closest.
- The question was asked who the Collaboration Hub was aimed at and it was mooted that it was consumers who are looking for what biodegradability/compostability means and brands/retailers who are looking to make claims about their leathers.
- The group felt that pushing a fast fashion model was mixed messaging and that durability and longevity was a priority.
- A longer-term purpose of the group was to identify sensitivities involved in biodegradability issues, e.g., definitions, standards, ecotoxins, and plant response, circularity.
- It was mentioned that leather is a mixed material, unlike plastic, which is generally one chemistry.
- The group was to think about whole products and their biodegradability, leather is only one of the components.

Next steps

- To begin explaining basic things to the public (consumers) – an outline of what these articles will need to be detailed.
 - Once the outline is agreed then as a Hub we can share and draft short Easy Reads - that can be shared with mainstream and social media
 - Establish a plan of when these articles get published.
- To share good background documents on biodegradability/compostability to brands and retailers – these will need to be sourced.