

## STeP by OEKO-TEX® for Leather Production

*In the summer of 2019, STeP assessment will be extended to cover leather production facilities. The name will then also change: "Sustainable Textile Production" will become "Sustainable Textile and Leather Production" – the product name STeP will be retained.*

In the global leather industry there already exist numerous country-specific initiatives of the respective trade associations which have already incorporated both environmental protection during leather production as well as protection against chromium VI formation in the requirement profiles of their labelling systems. Through the introduction of their own concepts or through ISO certification according to, e.g., ISO 9000 und 14000 ff, very many companies choose to demonstrate that a company philosophy of constant improvement ensures company success even in difficult times.



Particularly in the case of consumer products, OEKO-TEX® aims to ensure that they are produced with minimal content of pollutants harmful to humans and as gently as possible. The fewer the number of problematic substances in the starting materials, the greater the possibilities of recycling without the attendant danger of enrichment. These intentions are common to both OEKO-TEX Standard 100 and Leather Standard by OEKO-TEX®.

For this reason, OEKO-TEX® developed not only a product-related but also a production-related certification process as long ago as the 1990s. It awards companies which engage in active environmental protection. Its further development with STeP by OEKO-TEX® for sustainable production conditions in the textile industry permits modular analysis of all relevant areas within a company, such as chemicals management, environmental performance, environmental management, health and safety, social responsibility, and quality management. STeP certification thus permits comprehensive and reliable analysis of the extent to which production companies operate in a sustainable manner; it quantifies and visualises what has been achieved. STeP facilitates the kind of environmental management that permits saving of resources and reflects the appreciation of company employees.

STeP offers an instrument for self-assessment at every stage of the industrial production process all the way to the end product. Answering of a set of questions results in a strengths and weaknesses analysis, which serves as a suitable basis for prioritisation.

OEKO-TEX® has just published the basics of a STeP assessments for the leather sector. It is concerned with the sustainable production of leather and its processing in automobiles, furniture, clothing, or footwear. Existing certification systems are also considered here.

Companies interested in participating in pilot projects are welcome to approach us.

We will keep you informed about the latest developments concerning the new STeP standard through regular updates on our homepage.

**Please direct your questions to:**

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