

Goal and scope announced for world's largest lifecycle assessment for leather

October 11, 2022: Leather Working Group (LWG) has announced the goal and scope of the LWG Lifecycle Assessment (LCA) project for leather, the largest of its kind in the world. The study will include leather manufactured for the automotive, upholstery, footwear, and leather goods industries.

In November 2021, [LWG first announced the kick-off of the world's largest LCA study](#) for leather, to investigate and understand the environmental impact of leather manufactured by facilities that obtained LWG certification.

What is an LCA?

A Lifecycle Assessment (LCA) is defined by the [European Environment Agency](#) as an evaluation of the effects that a product has on the environment across its entire lifetime. LCAs can be used to give businesses access to real data, allowing them to understand their resource use and impact, and to set targets for reduction.

About the LWG LCA

Working with Italian consultancy [Spin360](#), the LWG LCA study has defined its goal and scope, which will include the most representative product families within the top 80% (by volume) of finished leather made by LWG-audited manufacturers. This includes five product families as listed in the table below:

	Family 1	Family 2	Family 3	Family 4	Family 5
Origin	Bovine	Bovine	Bovine	Bovine	Bovine
Tannage	Chrome & chrome-free (glutaraldehyde)	Chrome	Chrome	Chrome	Chrome
Leather type	Grain split	Grain split	Grain split	Grain split	Flesh split (suede and PU-coated)
For industry	Automotive	Upholstery	Footwear	Leathergoods	Upholstery & footwear

The LWG LCA will be a “cradle-to-gate” study, which means it will include the environmental footprint of leather, from its origin on a farm up to the finished leather manufacturing facility.

Each product family will consist of multiple different supply chain configurations, based on the upstream sourcing of the finished leather manufacturers.

As of July 2022, both LWG and Spin360 have engaged with participating leather manufacturers that are certified against the LWG standard to collect detailed information on their supply chain. Using this data, the scope of the LCA will consider 30 different supply chain configurations from 22 different manufacturers of



finished leather. In addition, the LCA will also embed data from an additional 20 supply chain configurations collected previously by Spin360.

In terms of material origin, the LCA will cover raw hides originated from multiple different regions, including Europe, North America, South America, Central America, and Turkey.

The study will comprise a mixture of quality benchmark data for minor aspects (such as machine power), and primary data for more significant parameters. Primary data will include information on raw materials, physical parameters, configuration parameters at the factory (energy and water), the inventory of chemicals used for the processes, and wastewater laboratory analysis reports.

The LWG LCA is an effort to provide the industry with more accurate, up-to-date data on key environmental impact indicators in leather production. Leather manufacturers will be able to use this environmental impact data to take action to reduce their own footprint.

What's next?

Once the primary data collection phase has been finalized, Spin360 will begin working on understanding key impact indicators to assess environmental performance, such as global warming, eutrophication, abiotic depletion of fossil fuels, water use, and chemical toxicity. The data will be aggregated to provide a detailed, peer-reviewed, science-based report representing the environmental footprint of leather made by manufacturers certified against the LWG Standard. The report is due to be published in late 2022.

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Press Office

Any questions? You can get in touch with our press office via communications@leatherworkinggroup.com




About Leather Working Group (LWG) - A global community for responsibly made leather



[Leather Working Group \(LWG\)](http://www.leatherworkinggroup.com) is a global multi-stakeholder community of change makers. We are a not-for-profit committed to driving best practices and positive social and environmental change for responsible leather production. Steered by our diverse global membership of over 1,800 organizations, we currently represent 25% of the world's finished leather production. We drive excellence in the leather industry, minimizing the impact of leather production, and challenging industry perceptions, through a suite of tools and the LWG standard. Discover more at www.leatherworkinggroup.com

About SPIN 360 – The Factory of Sustainable Innovation



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Advanced tools and services for sustainable change since 1997



[SPIN 360](#) is active and particularly competent in the international tanning sector having developed projects with all the main tanneries in: United States, China, Vietnam, Europe, Asia, Africa and Oceania.

SPIN 360 has conducted more than 230 life cycle assessment studies on the leather product and works with customers in the tanning sector, brands, car manufacturers and suppliers of raw materials (raw and chemical).

SPIN 360 provides advanced solutions represented by specialized services and tools which improve the environmental performance of the international tannery.

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