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European Confederation of the Footwear Industry

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LIFE GreenShoes4All
Footwear environmental footprint category rules implementation
and innovative green shoes eco-design and recycling

A group of European footwear actors wish to contribute to tackle the negative impacts of climate change in the planet by implementing and promoting a new methodology to calculate the product category rules for footwear, an initiative launched by the Commission a few years ago to stop proliferation of green allegations in products. Under the new European project "LIFE GreenShoes4All" led by the Portuguese Footwear Technology centre (CTCP), the European Footwear Confederation (CEC) and other project partners will exploit this methodology that is expected help footwear and allied trade companies to be more resources' efficient, reduce materials and discarded waste.

The European footwear industry wants to increase the level of sustainability and innovation in the shoes' production and recycling process. Mass production combined with the increase of shoes consumption is making companies to re-think the goods and create both innovative and attractive products, taking into consideration the environmental challenges and the need to reduce their costs.

The four-year project "**LIFE GreenShoes4All**", co-founded by the European Commission was launched in São João da Madeira last week by a consortium of research organisations, training centres, national footwear associations, and manufacturers of footwear and components from Belgium, Portugal, Romania, and Spain. The project will support the **Single Market for Green Products** by implementing a new method to measure environmental performance throughout the lifecycle, **the Product Environmental Footprint (PEF) for footwear**. The overall objective is to reduce the problems and costs companies are facing and to give a better understanding to the consumers regarding the labels used. Consumers indeed tend to be confused by the flow of green misleading terms and labels.

More concretely, the **PEF methodology** will help manufacturing companies reduce the CO₂ and greenhouses gases emissions, aiming at a low carbon economy. Through the development of innovative eco-design concepts and eco-processes, natural resources will be used in a more efficient manner encouraging the reduction of PEF, to obtain performing shoes. The LIFE GreenShoes4All is also directed to create new green jobs, services and products thanks to the new recycling routes and business models towards a Circular Economy.

The first footwear and allied trade companies have already embraced the "LIFE GreenShoes4All" project because it will increase their competitiveness within an environmental frame and an eco-friendly approach, giving rise to a sustainable methodology. By the end of the project, the Product Environmental Footprint could become a worldwide standard for measuring environmental performance and reducing the multiplication of "green labels" lacking a common understanding.

