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European Confederation of the Footwear Industry

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**LIFE GreenShoes4All project: a European journey
towards reducing the environmental impact of footwear products**

Two years after the launch of the LIFE GreenShoes4All project co-funded by the European Commission “Footwear environmental footprint category rules implementation and innovative green shoes eco-design and recycling”, the consortium is pleased to share its achievements and to outline their work towards a circular economy, targeting “Zero Waste to Landfill”.

With an increase in footwear consumption in 2018 to 3.1 pairs of shoes for each person on earth and the worrying numbers related to global waste, LIFE GreenShoes4All project is aiming to reduce the environmental impact of footwear products and to promote a more efficient use of natural resources. This will be possible thanks to the implementation of Product Environmental Footprint (PEF) methodology, new approaches to recycling polymeric waste materials and developing innovative recycled materials and components with high performance.

To support companies in reaching consumer expectations on more sustainable products by, among others, integrating environmental aspects in the design of new footwear concepts with lower PEF, the project partners have defined an eco-design methodology and developed a public Eco-design Guide available in several languages.

The advantage of a PEF benchmark is two-fold: it will reduce costs and problems that companies are facing, and it will offer consumers a clear and unique understanding of the labels used. Partners are working together with fashion brands and with European associations in the framework of the Apparel & Footwear Technical Secretariat on developing and implementing Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules (PEFCRs) for certain categories of apparel and footwear products during the ongoing [Transition Phase](#). The footwear PEF are further going to be implemented with the support of the LIFE GreenShoes4All project. Concretely, the consortium is creating a benchmark for environmental performance for footwear that could be inserted in one harmonised label.

Swapping the office with the laboratory, the qualified project partners experimented with polymeric waste materials generated during their production process with potential for recycling and defined the needed pre-treatment processes. The work began also on the development of new recycled thermoplastic and thermoset materials. The implementation of LIFE GreenShoes4All approaches will contribute to reduce the CO₂ and other greenhouse gases emissions within the footwear sector, towards an EU low carbon economy, reinforcing the objectives of EU's Environment, Climate and Energy Frameworks.

The LIFE GreenShoes4All project work is advancing towards an implementation phase, and the consortium invites interested European footwear companies to contact them to share their journey towards the production of performing shoes with lower PEF. In a near future, the PEF could become a benchmark for measuring environmental performance for footwear products sold in the EU market and reducing the expansion of “green labels”.

More information on the project can be found on <https://www.greenshoes4all.eu/> and on the CEC twitter account [@EUfootwear](#).

