

Sustainability at the core

Gruppo Mastrotto, the industrial group in the global tanning industry which I represent, places sustainability at the core of its business and its future growth.

First and foremost, we must carefully manage our water usage; considered an essential resource not only for the environment but also for the tanning sector given its key role in the production process of leather. The rational management of water is critical, which can be implemented through the design of leather articles, the recycling of process water as well as inside the different production departments within the business.

Secondly, emissions. It is possible to reduce the emissions released into the atmosphere by carefully choosing sustainable chemical products, such as water-based leather finishing chemicals instead of solvents, by enhancing their use, as well as new spraying and coating technologies with proper maintenance and continuous technical improvements and upgrades.

At Gruppo Mastrotto, energy conservation is included in our current and medium-term projects, and we are using new technologies that provide reduced energy production and the recovery of thermal energy, for instance. We have heavily invested in cogeneration and this year we have installed our third cogeneration plant.

Waste reduction and reuse

As far as the waste products are concerned, we focus on suitable disposal or reuse. In this regard, I would like to point out that there are many new downstream technologies in our sector that give life to eco-friendly by-products such as fertilisers, oils and other compostable products from the leather making process.

Supplying major brands in the fashion, furniture and automotive industries forces us to comply with ever more restrictive parameters related to our environmental performance and we are continuously audited by highly specialised teams with specific proficiencies in the environmental and energy fields.

Meeting the needs of our key customers for a sustainable supply chain paves the way towards a continuous improvement, where sustainability is the main driver. Therefore, it is essential to comply with the specific environmental international certifications, as they help us to set up common standards which companies can



abouttheauthor

Chiara Mastrotto is President of Gruppo Mastrotto, which was founded in 1958 and now ranks as one of the top five tanning groups in the world, and the largest in Europe. It owns the largest logistics operation in the leather industry with prompt delivery across the world. After obtaining a Law Degree and a lawyer state exam in 2003, Chiara Mastrotto joined the company; setting down a strategic vision increasingly focussed on international markets, and based on the needs of customers, employees and stakeholders. With the wish to improve and develop increasingly specialised skills, she completed a MBA for Businessmen at the Cuoa Foundation in 2009. A year later she became Managing Director of the Group and, in 2012, was appointed President of the Group. Gruppo Mastrotto is headquartered in Arzignano, Italy, and has 16 locations; seven manufacturing plants and five logistic facilities around Arzignano as well as manufacturing plants in Brazil, Tunisia, Indonesia and Mexico.

adhere to improve their sustainability performance.

We are involved in environmental protection projects financed by the European Commission, which represents a further opportunity to develop initiatives in support of the environment. Thanks to these projects, companies can contribute to the development of new processes and technologies to reduce the impact of their production on the environment.

Skills and training

Finally, we tanners, should not forget about training; in classrooms and through practical tests for our staff, especially in relation to potential environmental emergencies - knowing how to act and tackle any critical situations efficiently and restricting any environmental damage.

Nevertheless, I believe that the main point should be an awareness by industrial entrepreneurs, the company owners or senior managers. There should be an upstream desire to invest constantly to achieve more sustainable production processes and systems.

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I feel that the key step that entrepreneurs should understand first, is that by investing in sustainability, it is not against the logic of financial profit that drives the growth of a company but, on the contrary, it should represent an important competitive leverage, which is able to provide a better position for any company. In addition, let us not forget the correct moral and social ethics of such business choices, related to a sense of responsibility towards the environment in which we live today and where new generations will live in the future.

This sense of responsibility is one where we should look both inside and outside of the company, to the staff, their families, who deserve to be able to live in an increasingly safer world.

After all, doing business means to leave a better place for those who come after us. ■

Chiara Mastrotto