

With responsibility into the future

► **What does cads do exactly? What are the objectives of the cooperation and what are the challenges for the future? Answers are supplied by cads chairman Michael Tackenberg.**



When was cads founded, and what were the reasons for launching this cooperation?

In the 1990s, our cooperation was initially a working group integrated in the PFI (Prüf- und Forschungsinstitut Pirmasens e. V.) that was occupied with the prevention of hazardous substances in shoes. A major problem at the time involved Azo dyes, which luckily are no longer a topic today, followed by chromium VI, which was discovered for the first time in children's shoes made of leather in 2007 and caused a great deal

of commotion in the media. The occurrence, or prevention, of chromium VI in leather confronted the branch with great challenges. Challenges that we faced up to and for which we developed appropriate measures. Since 2010, this unique regional cooperation, cads, has been under the aegis of the Deutsches Schuhinstitut.

What topics does cads deal with in concrete terms?

We are concerned not only with hazardous substances in shoes, textiles and leather goods, but we are also involved proactively and globally in the prevention of hazardous substances. Working groups with different focusses were established in order to be able to approach the complex tasks in a structured and targeted manner. cads members can contribute their own centres of interest to these working groups and take part actively. At present, there are seven groups, including, for example, "Handling process chemicals safely", "Test methods and standardisation", "Chromium VI", "Handling and using biocidal substances safely", to name just a few (see pages 16–18 as well).

The core competences of cads were recently extended.

What was this about exactly? And what were the motives?
The focus of our work was at first on product safety. cads has now been extended by two core sectors, namely protection of the environment and social standards. Taking into account the increasing requirements of civil society for global purchasing, what is important here is sustainable and permanent minimisation and effective control of the potential risks along the global value-added chain. The point is to support our partner companies

in process optimisation, to organise this actively and, in this way also to develop effective protection for the sector, the Association and the member companies in the long-term. In the area of social standards this means that we are drawing up a cads code of behaviour. With regard to protection of the environment, our goal is to develop production that protects resources and the environment. The new logo "cads" now stands for "Cooperation for assuring defined standards in shoe and leather goods production".

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Shoe production is international. How can cads succeed in bringing more transparency and safety into the supply chains?

cads sets development objectives that are binding for all members. Our concern is to frame these objectives actively with our global partners. We will create more transparency with training measures. A type of self-control results with monitoring. To exercise the control function, findings from monitoring are brought together in the cads business office.

What are cads' aims for the future?

Our main aim is to enable environmentally friendly and sustainable production.

How many companies are members of cads at present? Are there still any ideal candidates?

At present we have 79 members. Our ideal candidates include material suppliers and tanning companies, but also specialist dealers. I think cads is a good instrument for the shoe trade to stand out from the competition and to show their sustainable, socially and environmentally conscious attitude towards customers and consumers. There is still a great deal of potential!