The VII All African Leather Fair (AALF 2014) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, was inaugurated by the His Excellency President Mulatu Teshome (Ph.D.) in the presence of His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Abtew, Minister of Industry on 20th February, 2014 at Millennium Hall on Bole Road. The trade fair was organised by ELIA, LIDI, UNDP, COMESA-LLPI, UNIDO, MOI and participated by tanners, footwear and other leather goods manufacturers, research and development institutes, equipment and technology suppliers, chemical and input suppliers, manpower training institutions, trade promotion organizations, etc from almost 41 countries around the world, participate in AALF 2014.

African companies and organizations participated the fair in large numbers. According to the organisers, companies engaged in leather industry from Kenya, Sudan, South Africa, Namibia and Tanzania from Africa, and others from India, Germany, France, Switzerland, USA, Turkey, Japan, China and Indonesia were among the displayers of products in the fair. Many technical events related to leather industries in Ethiopia were conducted by the organisers for the benefit of the participants. The fair provided opportunity for national, regional and international exchanges, and also for meeting prospective buyers and tapping the huge market potential, according to the organizers.
CSIR-CLRI at AALF 2014

CSIR-CLRI stall attracted visitors from various African countries and others looking for technical assistance related to Academic, Leather Processing, Leather Products design and manufacture, Environmental related issues and others like System Development, Development Plan, etc. Dr. B. Chandrasekaran, Mr. P.S. Suresh Kumar, Dr. B. Madhan, Mr. E. Guruprasath, Mr. G. Sathiamoorthy, Mr. R. Chandrasekar and Mr. S. Nithiyanantha Vasagam participated in the AALF-2014.
Background:

Live Stock Resource

Ethiopia has one of the largest livestock populations in the world providing a strong raw material base for the leather industry. Ethiopia's livestock population is estimated at 45 million cattle, 23 million sheep and 23 million goats. Livestock are predominantly owned by small farmers and pastoralists. The highland, agricultural based system of livestock production includes some 80% of cattle, 75% of sheep and 30% of goats' population.

Raw Hides and Skins

About 80% of all hides and skins entering the formal market are from rural areas where they are collected by private traders. The remaining 20% are derived from slaughtering facilities in major towns and cities.

There are about 1500 registered private traders dealing in raw hides and skins an important force in the industry through the operation of rural operation network supplying raw hides and skins through long chain (small collectors, small traders, middle and heavy suppliers) to the tanneries in the country. Almost 100% of sheep skin is supplied in wet salted. About 75% of goats' skin supplied in wet salted and the 25% as air dried. With regard to the cattle hide 10% are processed as fresh, 60% are in wet salted and 30% air dried. Around 8.5 million pieces sheep skin, 7 million pieces goat skin and 1.2 million pieces hides are supplied to the tanneries per annum. It has been estimated to recover 96%, 93% and 36% of sheep skin, goat skin and cattle hides respectively and the rest being uncollected or consumed by rural tanners.

Tanning Industry

The Ethiopian leather industry is backed by this considerable support and has gained momentum of growth over the last several years. The number of tanning industries that were handful ten years ago have now rose to twenty six with more under formation. All of them are of considerable size with the smallest having a soaking capacity of 3000 skins per day of eight working hours. Due to quality raw material resource and conducive industrial climate world renowned tanners from India and China have established tanneries in Ethiopia. The national plan, Growth and Transformation Plan puts the leather industry as one of the priority sector and expects export of USD 500 million at the end of the plan year in 2015.

The Footwear Industry

The footwear sub-sector has also grown considerably fast. The daily output of export standard footwear has now reached more than ten thousand pairs per day from a very modest size of less than two thousand only five years ago. This is expected to reach a least twenty thousand in less than two years. Encouraged by this upswing, world known footwear companies from China, Italy and the UK have shifted their facilities to Ethiopia from where they have been actively engaged in South East Asia.
Since recently, at least four facilities have been under construction with an intended combined daily output of more than 15,000 pairs.

**The Leather Products Industry in Ethiopia**

The leather products industry in Ethiopia has gathered momentum to jump-start spurred by the various support initiatives facilitating its growth. The number of industries engaged in production of high class leather footwear, garments and accessories has been on the increase so much that production to lure the sophisticated tastes and trends of the highest market segment in the western world was possible. More interesting is that modern dress glove making industries have recently commenced production and export. There is no question that the accessory market in the West is recognizing this resource based country not only as a supplier of raw materials but also as a choice for top level consumer goods of leather at competitive terms and conditions. In the few years ahead, those that established themselves in this virgin new source will certainly be seen reaping the benefit with their upper hands as first entrants in the industry that has been shifting its centers of importance from its classical positions in Western Europe, to the Middle East, now in the Far East and surely in Africa soon - the continent of tomorrow.

**Ethiopia exports**

According to research conducted by the Ethiopian Leather Industry Development Institute (LIDI), Ethiopia exports finished leather to 40 countries, according to Abdissa. The largest importers of Ethiopian leather are China, India, Hong Kong, Italy, the United Kingdom, and America. In 2012/13, the leather industry earned USD 123.4 million.

**Source:**

http://www.elia-aalf.com/sector.html
http://allafrica.com/stories/201402250095.html
http://allanapotashblog.org/2014/02/24/24-february-2014-news-round-up/