



## ANALYSIS: Puma chief eager for sustainability standard

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Today's Puma press briefing in London was far more than merely the launch of a shoe-box.

Puma's CEO Jochen Zeitz also made it clear that sustainability issues are central to the way apparel and footwear firms are currently doing business.

Zeitz told media he wants to work with his rivals towards sustainability solutions, like the company's new '[clever little bag](#)' for shoe transit.

Meanwhile, he believes that [EU anti-dumping duties on leather shoes from China and Vietnam](#) are holding back green investments.

Puma's latest green targets include bringing 50% of products up to scratch with its Puma Sustainability-Index (S-Index) by 2015.

The new index includes packaging, but also the production of footwear and apparel using organic cotton and recycled materials.

Together with its new packaging idea, Zeitz said he would be happy to use the index as a benchmark for the industry, in order to set a standard.

His stance echoes [similar calls by industry experts at Prime Source Forum](#) in Hong Kong earlier this month, regarding the 'standardisation' of issues like sustainability, social compliance and product safety.

Zeitz said today (13 April): "If anybody would like to use our S-Index we'd be more than happy to share that with others.

"We believe we set the standard and given that the industry has not been able to come up with one we defined our own.

"We will start a dialogue with the industry and in the long run it will hopefully lead to a standard that everyone can live by and accept."

It is perhaps inevitable that Puma's green ambitions are limited by the availability of recycling programs and materials, with many sustainable technologies still in their infancy.

But Zeitz also says the company would have [more resources for sustainability projects without the recent EU extension](#) of anti-dumping duties on leather shoes from China and Vietnam.

He said: "What we are saying is there is a useless anti-dumping quota in Europe and it costs money. It makes no sense and that money could be used better in other areas.

"When the anti-dumping duties go away we can take the money and invest it into sustainable projects."

Despite these obstacles Puma is by no means the only apparel brand making strides in the sustainability area, and industry leaders in the green space are being urged to combine their

efforts.

Indeed, the term "co-opetition" was coined by an electronics industry expert speaking at Prime Source Forum, and today's briefing again showed the fashion industry needs to co-operate while competing.

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