



SWITCH

4th SWITCH Scientific Meeting.

UNESCO-IHE

Delft, Netherlands.

4th – 7th October 2009



UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE COLOMBIA

SEDE BOGOTÁ

INSTITUTO DE ESTUDIOS AMBIENTALES - IDEA

Assessment of the “associativeness” a strategy of competitiveness in the leather tanning industry

GUILLERMO ANDRÉS LEÓN

Msc. Candidate of Business Administration

galeonm@unal.edu.co

Bogota, Colombia

This dissertation is part of the project called: “Strategic Plan in the leather tanning industry in Villapinzón: competitiveness and innovation in the leather industry”. This project is aimed at improving the environmental conditions and competitiveness in the tanning industry in the regions of Villapinzón and Choconta (Colombia).

After years of experience in the search for more environmentally friendly actions in the tanning industry, it has been found that the concept of “associativeness” is the key to reach sustainability. The research goal is to pinpoint which are the major factors controlling the definition of mechanisms of associativeness, under the hypothesis that an enhancement of the link between the people involved at different levels will improve the current situation in terms of environment and socio-economic issues.

General view of Villapinzon



Tanners of Villapinzon



ecologic compost



In Latin-American, many efforts have been put to strengthen the medium-size industry. In Colombia many symposiums and other academic events have taken place to promote and evaluate the subject of “associativeness” as a strategy to overcome production and environmental problems.

Nowadays, when the economy is broken down, many academics emphasize that small companies are the key of growth, stability and the creation of new jobs. Small and medium size enterprises represent 90% of the Colombian enterprises, account for 38.7% of the GDP and provide 57% of the jobs.

It is worth noting that associative efforts require concrete objectives. They may be related to the development of scale economies, reduction of production costs, improvement of technology, shared knowledge and the improvement of negotiation skills, so that the idea of working together in a structured network may boost the industry in the short and long term. In the particular case of Villapinzon and Choconta, it is expected that the construction of the new waste treatment plant is the starting step of this process.



Water treatment plant

ACURTIR, an association of people related to the business of leather tanning, was funded in the municipality of Villapinzon. This association promotes the integration between small and medium-size enterprises around the technical aspects of the industry, the reduction of the negative environmental impacts, the increase in negotiation capability and the acquisition of equipment.

acurtir