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Product Carbon Footprint Analysis: Leather Wallet

Prepared by a Senior Sustainability Consultant
specializing in GHG Protocol

Protocol Data (Accounting Standard): GHG Protocol

Disclaimer: This report is generated based on available data and industry standards, utilizing plausible estimations and secondary emission factors from reputable databases such as Ecoinvent and DEFRA. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy and adherence to the specified methodologies, the figures presented are illustrative for the purpose of this detailed analysis and should be further refined with primary, product-specific data for real-world application.

Executive Summary

This report presents a high-detail Product Carbon Footprint (PCF) analysis for a standard leather wallet, meticulously conducted according to the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol. The analysis covers the lifecycle from 'cradle-to-factory-gate' within a geographic scope encompassing Europe and the global supply chain, with final production occurring in the Netherlands. Special attention has been given to incorporating the latest 2026 Land Sector and Removals (LSR) Standard update for relevant emissions and ensuring at least 95% coverage for Scope 3 reporting. The primary objective is to identify greenhouse gas (GHG) emission hotspots throughout the product's upstream value chain, providing a foundational understanding for targeted decarbonization efforts.

The analysis reveals that the vast majority of emissions are concentrated within Scope 3, primarily driven by the raw material acquisition, particularly leather production, which includes significant agricultural impacts. Manufacturing energy (Scope 2) and minimal direct emissions (Scope 1) at the factory contribute a smaller, yet quantifiable, portion. Key recommendations include optimizing material sourcing, exploring lower-impact alternatives, enhancing energy efficiency, and engaging with suppliers to reduce upstream emissions.

1. Define Scope

The first step in this Product Carbon Footprint (PCF) analysis is to clearly define the parameters guiding our assessment, ensuring a robust and consistent evaluation in accordance with the GHG Protocol.

1.1 Functional Unit

The functional unit for this PCF study is defined as:

- **1.0 unit of a finished leather wallet.**

This unit serves as the reference against which all material and energy flows, and their associated environmental impacts, are quantified.

1.2 System Boundary

The system boundary adopted for this analysis is "**factory_gate**". This means the assessment includes all life cycle stages from the extraction of raw materials (cradle) up to the point where the finished leather wallet leaves the manufacturing facility in the Netherlands. Downstream stages such as product use, distribution from the factory to the consumer, and end-of-life treatment are excluded from this particular boundary definition but are acknowledged as areas for future consideration.

The boundary encompasses:

- Raw material acquisition and pre-processing (e.g., leather tanning, polyester fiber production, metal extraction).
- Transportation of raw materials to the manufacturing facility.
- Manufacturing processes at the facility (e.g., cutting, stitching, assembly).
- Packaging of the finished product at the factory.

1.3 Geographic Scope

The geographic scope is defined as:

- **Final Production Country:** Netherlands
- **Supply Chain Focus:** Europe plus Global Chain. This implies that raw materials and components may originate from various European countries or globally, with their transport impacts accounted for up to the Netherlands-based production facility.

1.4 Accounting Standard

This PCF analysis strictly adheres to the **GHG Protocol**. This includes:

- Categorization of emissions into Scope 1 (direct emissions), Scope 2 (indirect emissions from purchased energy), and Scope 3 (all other indirect emissions in the value chain).
- Application of the **2026 Land Sector and Removals (LSR) Standard Update** for land use and carbon removals where relevant, particularly for agricultural products like leather. The LSR Standard, effective January 1, 2027, provides requirements and guidance for quantifying, reporting, and tracking land emissions and CO₂ removals, building on the Corporate and Scope 3 Standards.
- Ensuring at least **95% coverage for Scope 3 reporting** as per 2026 requirements, recognizing that Scope 3 emissions typically constitute the largest portion of a product's carbon footprint.

1.5 Allocation

Where co-products or by-products exist (e.g., meat and hide from livestock farming), economic allocation is primarily used to distribute environmental burdens in the upstream supply chain for materials like leather. For internal manufacturing processes, mass allocation is applied for any shared utilities if multiple products are made on the same line, though for this single product analysis, direct attribution is mostly feasible.

2. Map Lifecycle (LCI Inventory Stages)

The lifecycle of the leather wallet, from 'cradle-to-factory-gate', involves several key stages, each with associated material and energy inputs and potential emissions. These stages are mapped to inform the data collection process.

2.1 Raw Material Acquisition & Pre-processing

- **Leather Production:**
 - Cattle rearing (including feed production, enteric fermentation, manure management, land use change - significant upstream impacts).
 - Slaughtering and hide processing.
 - Tanning and finishing processes (e.g., chromium tanning, vegetable tanning, chemical inputs, water, energy for heating and drying).
- **Lining Fabric Production (e.g., Polyester):**
 - Petroleum extraction and refining (for fossil-based polyester) or agricultural feedstock cultivation (for bio-based).
 - Polymerization and fiber extrusion.
 - Fabric weaving and finishing.
- **Metal Hardware Production (e.g., Zinc Alloy):**
 - Mining and extraction of zinc ore and other alloying elements.
 - Smelting and refining processes.
 - Casting and forming of components (e.g., zippers, snaps).
- **Ancillary Materials (e.g., Adhesives, Threads):**
 - Chemical manufacturing for adhesives.
 - Polymer or natural fiber production for threads.

2.2 Transportation of Raw Materials

- Road freight, sea freight, or rail transport of all raw materials and components from their respective production sites (Europe and Global) to the leather wallet manufacturing facility in the Netherlands.

2.3 Manufacturing in the Netherlands (Factory Operations)

- **Energy Consumption:** Electricity for cutting machines, sewing machines, lighting, heating/cooling, and other factory equipment.
- **Process Emissions:** Minimal direct emissions for assembly (e.g., small-scale solvent evaporation from adhesives, though modern factories aim to minimize this).
- **Waste Generation:** Leather scraps, fabric offcuts, packaging waste from incoming materials.

2.4 Packaging of Finished Product

- Production of packaging materials (e.g., cardboard boxes, plastic wrap, tissue paper).
- Assembly of packaging at the factory gate.

3. Collect Data (Primary/Secondary Data Points)

For this high-detail PCF analysis, a combination of estimated primary data (for activity data) and secondary data (for emission factors from industry-standard databases like Ecoinvent and DEFRA) is used. Given the hypothetical nature, plausible estimations are made for material quantities and energy consumption based on typical industry practices for a leather wallet.

3.1 Estimated Material Inputs for 1 Leather Wallet (Approximate Weight: 0.15 kg)

Material	Estimated Quantity (kg)	Notes
	0.12 kg	

Material	Estimated Quantity (kg)	Notes
Finished Leather		Assuming a wallet uses 3-4 oz leather for the exterior and 2-3 oz for interior, translating to approx. 0.8-1.6 mm thickness. Total leather for a typical wallet is estimated to be around 120 grams.
Polyester Fabric (Lining)	0.01 kg	Common synthetic lining material.
Zinc Alloy (Hardware)	0.005 kg	For zippers, snaps, or decorative elements.
Adhesives & Threads	0.002 kg	Combined estimate for minor components.
Cardboard Packaging	0.05 kg	Outer box for the wallet.
Plastic Polybag/ Wrap	0.005 kg	Protective inner packaging.

3.2 Estimated Energy Inputs for Manufacturing in the Netherlands

Energy Type	Estimated Quantity (kWh)	Notes
Purchased Electricity	0.5 kWh	Estimated for cutting, stitching, assembly, lighting, and minimal facility operations for one wallet.

3.3 Estimated Transportation Inputs

Input Category	Assumed Origin	Distance (km)	Mode	Assumed Mass (kg)	Notes
Finished Leather	Southern Europe	1,500 km		0.12 kg	Transport of finished leather

Input Category	Assumed Origin	Distance (km)	Mode	Assumed Mass (kg)	Notes
			HGV Road Freight		to the Netherlands factory.
Polyester Fabric	Eastern Europe	2,000 km	HGV Road Freight	0.01 kg	Transport of fabric to the Netherlands factory.
Zinc Alloy	Germany	500 km	HGV Road Freight	0.005 kg	Transport of hardware to the Netherlands factory.
Adhesives & Threads	Western Europe	750 km	HGV Road Freight	0.002 kg	Transport of minor components.
Packaging Materials	Netherlands (local)	50 km	HGV Road Freight	0.055 kg	Transport of cardboard and plastic packaging.

3.4 Emission Factors (Industry Standard)

Source/Activity	Emission Factor (kg CO2e/unit)	Unit	Reference/Source Type
Finished Bovine Leather (cradle-to-gate including farming)	190.2	kg CO2e/kg	Cornell eCommons, Reassessment using global livestock data (2023)
Polyester Fabric Production (fossil-based)	3.5	kg CO2e/kg	Derived from Ecoinvent/Climateq/Carbonfact for PET production
Zinc (market for zinc, cradle-to-shelf)	5.177	kg CO2e/kg	Climateq (GEMIS v5.0, Germany)

Source/Activity	Emission Factor (kg CO2e/unit)	Unit	Reference/Source Type
Adhesives & Threads (estimated average)	5.0	kg CO2e/kg	Estimated based on chemical/textile inputs (Ecoinvent proxy)
Purchased Electricity (Netherlands grid mix, incl. chain emissions)	0.374	kg CO2e/kWh	CE Delft (2024), CO2emissiefactoren.nl (2021 data)
Cardboard Packaging (flat cardboard, cradle-to-grave)	1.53	kg CO2e/kg	Consumer Ecology / Group O (2021)
Plastic Packaging (PET clamshell, proxy for plastic wrap)	7.78	kg CO2e/kg	CarbonCloud (2024)
HGV Road Freight (Average EU)	0.062	kg CO2e/tonne-km	McKinnon for road transport operations (62g CO2/tonne-km)

4. Calculate Emissions (Activity * Emission Factor = CO2e)

Emissions are calculated for each activity data point using the corresponding emission factors. These are then categorized according to the GHG Protocol Scopes.

4.1 Scope 1 Emissions (Direct Emissions from Owned/Controlled Sources)

For a leather wallet manufacturing facility, direct emissions (e.g., from burning fuel for heating on-site or company-owned vehicles) are assumed to be negligible for the factory-gate boundary of the

product itself. If the factory used natural gas for heating, this would fall under Scope 1. For this analysis, we assume manufacturing is primarily powered by purchased electricity, thus minimizing Scope 1 direct operational emissions attributable to the product.

Activity	Activity Data	Emission Factor (kg CO2e/unit)	Total CO2e (kg)	Notes
Direct Fuel Consumption	0	N/A	0.00	Assumed negligible for product manufacturing at factory-gate.

Total Scope 1 Emissions: 0.00 kg CO2e

4.2 Scope 2 Emissions (Indirect Emissions from Purchased Energy)

These emissions result from the generation of purchased electricity used in the Netherlands-based manufacturing facility.

Activity	Activity Data	Emission Factor (kg CO2e/unit)	Total CO2e (kg)	Notes
Purchased Electricity (Netherlands)	0.5 kWh	0.374 kg CO2e/kWh	0.187	Electricity for manufacturing processes.

Total Scope 2 Emissions: 0.187 kg CO2e

4.3 Scope 3 Emissions (All Other Indirect Emissions in the Value Chain)

Scope 3 emissions constitute the most significant portion of the PCF, covering purchased goods and services, upstream transportation, and waste from operations. Achieving at least 95% coverage for Scope 3 emissions is a key compliance requirement.

4.3.1 Scope 3 - Category 1: Purchased Goods and Services

This category includes emissions from the extraction, production, and processing of all raw materials and components purchased for the leather wallet.

Material	Quantity (kg)	Emission Factor (kg CO2e/kg)	Total CO2e (kg)	Notes
Finished Bovine Leather	0.12	190.2	22.824	Includes upstream farming (land use change, methane) and tanning.
Polyester Fabric (Lining)	0.01	3.5	0.035	Emissions from fossil-based polyester production.
Zinc Alloy (Hardware)	0.005	5.177	0.026	Emissions from zinc mining, smelting, and refining.
Adhesives & Threads	0.002	5.0	0.010	Estimated average for chemical and textile inputs.
Cardboard Packaging	0.05	1.53	0.077	Emissions from pulp and paper production.
Plastic Polybag/ Wrap	0.005	7.78	0.039	Emissions from plastic production.

Total Scope 3 - Category 1 Emissions: 23.011 kg CO2e

4.3.2 Scope 3 - Category 4: Upstream Transportation and Distribution

This category covers emissions from the transportation of all purchased materials and packaging to the manufacturing facility in the Netherlands.

Material Transported	Mass (kg)	Distance (km)	Mode	Emission Factor (kg CO2e/tonne-km)	Total CO2e (kg)
Finished Bovine Leather	0.12	1,500	HGV Road Freight	0.062	0.011
Polyester Fabric	0.01	2,000	HGV Road Freight	0.062	0.001
Zinc Alloy	0.005	500	HGV Road Freight	0.062	0.000
Adhesives & Threads	0.002	750	HGV Road Freight	0.062	0.000
Packaging Materials	0.055	50	HGV Road Freight	0.062	0.000

Note: Very small values are due to the low mass of a single wallet. Calculations use full precision before rounding.

Total Scope 3 - Category 4 Emissions: 0.012 kg CO2e

4.3.3 Scope 3 - Category 5: Waste Generated in Operations

This category accounts for emissions from the disposal and treatment of waste generated during the manufacturing of the leather wallet. We assume minimal waste and use an average waste emission factor.

Waste Type	Estimated Quantity (kg)	Emission Factor (kg CO2e/kg)	Total CO2e (kg)	Notes
Manufacturing Waste (e.g., leather scraps,	0.03	0.5	0.015	Estimated 20% waste factor for total material input (0.177 kg total)

Waste Type	Estimated Quantity (kg)	Emission Factor (kg CO2e/kg)	Total CO2e (kg)	Notes
fabric offcuts, packaging waste)				materials * 0.2), assuming mixed waste treatment/disposal.

Total Scope 3 - Category 5 Emissions: 0.015 kg CO2e

Total Scope 3 Emissions: 23.011 (Cat 1) + 0.012 (Cat 4) + 0.015 (Cat 5) = 23.038 kg CO2e

4.4 Total Product Carbon Footprint (PCF)

Scope	Total CO2e (kg)	Percentage of Total PCF
Scope 1 (Direct Emissions)	0.000	0.00%
Scope 2 (Purchased Electricity)	0.187	0.81%
Scope 3 (Value Chain Emissions)	23.038	99.19%
TOTAL PCF	23.225	100.00%

The total Product Carbon Footprint for one leather wallet, from cradle-to-factory-gate, is approximately **23.23 kg CO2e**.

4.5 GHG Protocol - 2026 LSR Standard Update Integration

The GHG Protocol Land Sector and Removals (LSR) Standard is a crucial development for comprehensive GHG accounting, particularly for products with agricultural origins like leather. This analysis incorporates the principles of the LSR Standard by utilizing an emission factor for finished bovine leather that explicitly includes

upstream farming impacts, such as enteric fermentation, manure management, and land use change associated with cattle rearing.

- The chosen emission factor of 190.2 kg CO₂e/kg for finished bovine leather is a holistic 'cradle-to-gate' value from a recent reassessment, where farming contributes a substantial portion (estimated at 68% of the Global Warming Potential in one study). This factor inherently accounts for biogenic carbon and land-use related emissions within the Scope 3, Category 1 (Purchased Goods and Services) calculation.
- While specific carbon removals (e.g., through improved pasture management) are not explicitly quantified in this illustrative example due to the aggregated nature of the secondary emission factor, the overall impact associated with the land sector is embedded in the chosen data. For a real-world application, granular data on sourcing practices (e.g., deforestation-free, sustainable grazing) would allow for a more precise application of LSR principles for potential removals or reduced impacts.

4.6 Scope 3 Compliance (95% Coverage)

Based on the calculations, Scope 3 emissions account for **99.19%** of the total PCF. This significantly exceeds the 2026 requirement of at least 95% coverage for Scope 3 reporting, demonstrating a comprehensive assessment of value chain impacts. The detailed breakdown across various material inputs and transportation ensures that all major upstream sources are captured and quantified.

5. Review & Report (Hotspots and Reliability)

5.1 Emission Hotspots

The analysis clearly identifies significant emission hotspots for the leather wallet:

- **Raw Material Acquisition (Scope 3, Category 1) - Leather:** By far the largest contributor, accounting for approximately 98.27% of the total PCF (22.824 kg CO₂e out of 23.225 kg CO₂e). This is primarily driven by the substantial upstream impacts associated with bovine farming (methane, land use change) and the energy-intensive tanning processes.
- **Purchased Electricity (Scope 2):** A distant second, contributing about 0.81% of the total PCF. While smaller, it's a direct operational emission that the manufacturer can directly influence.
- **Other Materials and Transportation (Scope 3):** Polyester, zinc, adhesives, threads, and all transportation collectively represent a minor portion of the total PCF, less than 1%. However, they are crucial for comprehensive reporting.

5.2 Data Reliability and Limitations

The reliability of this PCF analysis is influenced by the data sources and inherent complexities:

- **Secondary Data Reliance:** This report heavily relies on secondary emission factors from industry-standard databases (Ecoinvent, DEFRA proxies, peer-reviewed studies). While these are generally robust, they represent average values and may not perfectly reflect the specific processes, technologies, or geographical nuances of every supplier in a complex global supply chain.
- **Plausible Estimations:** Material quantities and energy consumption are estimated based on general product

knowledge. Actual product specifications and precise energy meters would yield more accurate 'primary' activity data.

- **LSR Standard Nuances:** While the chosen leather emission factor incorporates land sector impacts, a full implementation of the 2026 LSR Standard would benefit from highly granular, farm-level data to assess specific land-use changes, sequestration potentials, and biogenic carbon flows more accurately.
- **System Boundary:** The 'factory_gate' boundary excludes downstream emissions (e.g., product use, end-of-life), which could be significant over the product's lifespan. A full 'cradle-to-grave' LCA would provide a more complete picture.

5.3 Recommendations for Decarbonization

Based on the identified hotspots, the following recommendations are crucial for reducing the carbon footprint of the leather wallet:

1. Sustainable Leather Sourcing:

- Prioritize suppliers with verifiable low-carbon leather production, focusing on hides from farms with sustainable land management practices, reduced methane emissions, and no deforestation links.
- Explore innovative, lower-impact tanning technologies and suppliers utilizing renewable energy in their tanning processes.
- Investigate alternative materials with significantly lower carbon footprints, such as recycled leathers or bio-based leather alternatives, while considering their full lifecycle impacts.

2. Manufacturing Energy Efficiency:

- Implement energy efficiency measures within the Netherlands factory (e.g., LED lighting, optimized machinery, insulation).
- Transition to 100% renewable electricity contracts (e.g., wind, solar) to significantly reduce Scope 2 emissions.

3. Supply Chain Engagement:

- Collaborate with key suppliers (especially for leather) to collect primary data on their emissions and support their decarbonization efforts.
- Optimize transportation routes and consider more efficient modes (e.g., rail over road for longer distances within Europe) where feasible.

4. Waste Reduction:

- Implement programs to minimize material waste during manufacturing, particularly leather scraps, and explore opportunities for recycling or upcycling.

This PCF analysis provides a strong foundation for understanding the environmental impacts of the leather wallet and highlights critical areas for strategic intervention to drive sustainability improvements.