14. Sustainable Fashion: A Key for Future Fashion Industry

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14.1 Introduction:

Aiming to create a carbon-neutral fashion sector based on equity, social justice, animal welfare, and ecological integrity, sustainable fashion, also known as eco-fashion, is a broad phrase that encompasses all goods, processes, activities, and players that includes policy makers, businesses, customers. Sustainable fashion addresses more than simply the materials and products used in the industry. It addresses the complete process of producing clothing, who manufactures it, and how long a product lasts before it ends up in a landfill. By lowering greenhouse gas emissions, this sustainable movement fights the significant carbon footprint that the fast fashion sector and the fashion industry as a whole have left behind. In the coming century, reducing the environmental impact of fashion can help fight water pollution, air pollution, and general climate change, which may avert millions of premature lives. It was discovered in 2020 that a voluntary self-directed reform of the textile manufacturing supply chains by large firms themselves to significantly minimise the environmental impact of fashion had failed. Beyond marketing campaigns of "green washing," measures to change the fashion industry toward sustainability may need to include regulations for the establishment and enforcement of standardised credentials, as well as related import control, subsidy, and eco-tariff-like interventions which are need of the day (Alves, A., 2022; Niu, Baozhuang; Chen, Lei; Zhang, Jie, 2017; Dahl, R., 2010, Greenpeace, 2011, 2020 & 2021)

According to motif.org the top 13 designers started to make a change in 2021 by creating a movement of sustainable fashion. Sustainable fashion is a movement and design concept that supports environmental and social responsibility. The term "sustainable fashion" refers to clothing, footwear, and other accessories that are produced and used in the most environmentally and economically responsible ways possible. Nature will struggle more than ever to accommodate human demands as the world population is expected to exceed nine billion by 2030. Each year, the fashion business produces more than 1.2 billion tonnes of greenhouse gases, or more than 10% of the global carbon footprint. As more people and brands became aware of the need for reforms in the fashion industry, consumers began to demand transparent, environmentally friendly procedures, and brands began to adapt. So we can say that "sustainable fashion" encourages environmental and social responsibility. Clothing, footwear, and other items that are produced and used in the most environmentally and economically responsible ways are referred to as sustainable fashion. Eco-friendly fashion designers are making a change through the fashion strategy which:

- a. Eliminates toxic waste,
- b. Promotes animal rights
- c. Reduces the amount of microfibers released into the environment.
- d. Less stress is placed on the planet's resources because eco-friendly clothing is produced using sustainable methods

Byana, A. (2022) gave a thorough explanation of sustainable fashion is essential because there is so much misunderstanding about it. It's no secret that the fashion business is wreaking environmental havoc, with its carbon footprint accounting for almost 10% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. A change is desperately needed, from raising awareness of sustainable fashion methods to actively participating in enacting change. Fortunately, there are now more ethical brands, clients who desire sustainable clothing labels, and even a search engine specifically for ethical apparel. Exceptional accomplishments, as changes are not always simple, especially in the fashion sector. Any modification that differs from the economic forecasts for the sector is rejected or, at best, delayed. The only workable option is a gradual transition from fast to sustainable fashion, but without having a significant financial impact otherwise all efforts will go into vain. Sustainable clothing ensures fair wages and healthy working conditions and produces less waste. Reducing CO₂ and other greenhouse gas emissions and conserving water are two benefits of sustainable fashion and animal lives are saved through eco-friendly fashion.



Source: https://thevou.com

14.2 Components of Sustainable Fashion:

• Ethical and Fair-trade Fashion: Fair-trade and ethical fashions are two excellent examples of sustainable clothing. The welfare of those who work in the fashion business is connected to ethical and fair-trade operations. That includes issues like fair-trade manufacturing, safe working conditions, gender equality, and child labour. Based on the actions taken, both ethical fashion and fair-trade fashion can be further defined.

Companies, campaigners, and brands involved in ethical fashion care about people and their welfare, whether it is psychological or physical. On the other hand, fair-trade businesses and organisations make sure that supply chains are established and kept up in which producers and farmers receive a fair return for their goods. Both words address the socio-economic facets of the fashion business when combined. As a result, everyone taking part in these initiatives is looking for methods to enhance pay, benefits, and fair trade principles.

- Eco-friendly or 'Green' Fashion: Both phrases are applied to the environmental issues brought on by the fashion industry. Consider the waste production, land and water contamination, and resource waste that are accelerating the global climate disaster. Over 90% of clothing companies still utilise plastic and other degradable fibres, which have a significant negative impact on the environment. For instance, each year more than 70 million barrels of oil are needed to produce polyester fibres, which eventually wind up in the oceans and cause the death of animals or humans by becoming part of the food chain. Green fashion firms recommend switching out plastics with natural, biodegradable, and environmentally friendly fibres as a solution. As more businesses use eco-friendly and green products like organic cotton, hemp, mushroom leather, kelp leather, etc., the results to date have been encouraging.
- Vegan and Cruelty-free Fashion: Terms like "vegan" and "cruelty-free" fashion refer to items that are produced without the usage of components from animals or acquired humanely. Similar to this, every action made by proponents of vegan and cruelty-free fashion aims to educate the public about commercial animal farming and the use of animals for fashion. There are claims that vegan clothing does more harm than good, though. According to the argument, the majority of "Vegan Fashion Brands" recognised by PETA employ PVC and plastic-based substitutes for leather, which spares animals from being sacrificed but kills them by contaminating their habitat. More recently, proponents of the vegan fashion movement have insisted that a brand of vegan apparel must consider its environmental impact in order to be considered a "sustainable fashion company." The majority of cruelty-free and vegan clothing companies do this by employing substitutes for leather that are created from plants, fruits, mushrooms, or even in laboratories.
- Slow Fashion as in slow manufacturing: Slow fashion is a term that has just recently been used to describe a method of producing clothing that is in some ways the antithesis of "rapid fashion." Slow fashion is manufactured by skilled artisans as opposed to industrial mass production, which is why the term "artisanal fashion" is used to describe it. The utilisation of limited resources and wasteful production techniques alone, however, do not completely deplete the planet's resources or cause pollution. In order to achieve sustainable fashion, both the consumption of fashion and the upkeep of clothing play crucial roles. For additional information, see the section below titled "Conscious Fashion."
- Up-cycled Fashion: The practise of reusing and repurposing textiles, materials, and clothing to produce new fashion is referred to as upcycling fashion. A new type of highend luxury fashion has emerged as a result of the popularity of this aspect of upcycled sustainable fashion among celebrities and modern fashion designers. Upcycling fashion is more than just a novel means of recovering old textiles and transforming them into new clothing because old fabrics hold their own stories of usage, wear, and life. The use of recycled materials in the creation of new clothing gives the finished item a distinctive quality. As a result, the final garment is always one of a kind and therefore rare when

couture is produced from upcycled fashion. There is disagreement over how important upcycling fashion is for attaining fashion sustainability. Utilizing repurposed materials has a lot of advantages:

- Upcycled clothing aids in reducing waste.
- Reuses waste items that would otherwise go to the landfill since they have no use.
- Reduces emissions of carbon and hazardous gases from transportation and production.

However, there are environmental concerns with upcycling that must not be disregarded. Upcycling uses more energy and chemicals than would have been necessary in the case of innovative materials, releasing twice as many microfibres that pollute the oceans and the food chain of humans, killing animals and people.

Thrifting, Swapping, Sharing, Renting Fashion: Sustainable fashion is exemplified by practises like renting clothing, renting used clothing, swapping clothes, sharing clothes, and thrifting. Thrifting is a fantastic technique to prevent the detrimental effects of fashion manufacture and is readily available in thrift stores and second-hand retailers. There is no need to produce the clothing again because it already exists. Additionally, no pesticides, hazardous chemicals, or greenhouse gases are used to create a new collection. Renting, thrifting, swapping, and other comparable practises of second-hand and vintage clothing purchasing all have a less-discussed disadvantage. Rami Malek, Dwayne Johnson, Armie Hammer, Bradley Cooper, and John Krasinski are among the celebrities Ilaria Urbinati has as clientele. She explains:

"WITH one hand, you're doing good for the planet. WITH the other hand, you're doing harm to yourself."

The issue arises from how challenging it is to evaluate the calibre and condition of the clothing you're going to buy in this manner. Wearing clothing made of animal leather or plastic will gradually cause hazardous substances to leak onto your skin. The effects of these chemicals on your hormonal balance will eventually be visible in your skin, hair, nails, and other body parts.

- Circular Fashion reuse of discarded and recycled materials: Another excellent illustration of sustainable fashion is circular fashion. The phrase refers to "closed-loop" processes, or manufacturing strategies intended to recover wasted materials and repurpose them for use in manufacturing. Circular fashion innovations can take many different forms. But recycling polyester and other plastic-based materials and reusing them in the fashion industry is currently the most popular type of "closed-loop" method.
- Conscious Fashion consumers' role: The most well-known sustainable fashion trend is conscious fashion, which is viewed as a consumer response to the issues created by fast fashion. Above all, how customers choose to dress and how long they wear it depends considerably on the environmental impact of fashion. Clothing usage has decreased by 50% since fast fashion first appeared 15 years ago. Both the decreased product quality and the unquenchable urge to acquire and flaunt the newest trends are to blame for this. Therefore, advocates of conscious fashion seek to inform consumers about the advantages of selecting slow over quick or about how to properly care for their clothing. For instance, washing and drying a pair of jeans uses about two thirds of the

energy that is used to produce the clothing. The laundry procedure alone consumes more than 80% of the total energy in the case of underwear. The lesson here is that washing clothes requires electricity, water, and detergent regardless of how environmentally friendly they are.

14.3 How to Achieve Sustainable Fashion:

The examples of sustainable fashion mentioned above are all connected and related. A cleaner, safer environment and a more sustainable fashion industry are their shared objectives. There are several disagreements and misunderstandings despite the fact that these terms and categories overlap. Sustainability in fashion is challenging to achieve due of this intricacy. Details of two important factors that are essential to achieve sustainable fashion are as follows:

What Characterizes a Sustainable Fashion Brand: When a clothing company guarantees that garment workers receive fair pay and decent working conditions, it is said to be "ethical." The same ethical label, however, becomes unsustainable if it makes use of plastic and other synthetic materials. Additionally, the brand becomes unethical from the perspective of animal welfare if it uses animal leather. Therefore, engaging in one of the aforementioned actions is insufficient to qualify a label as sustainable. To guarantee environmental and social sustainability, it must adhere to as many conditions as possible.

What Does Fashion's Greenwashing Mean: Greenwashing, to put it in simple words, is when businesses represent themselves as being environmentally friendly or socially just while actually doing the opposite. In order to convince the public that an organization's products, objectives, and policies are environmentally friendly, marketing is cleverly exploited in "greenwashing," also known as "green shine, according to Wikipedia. Through false certificates, fashion regularly engages in "greenwashing."

Building trust between consumers and shops is the goal of fashion certifications. To "get" one of these certifications, a business just needs to make one organic cotton t-shirt, though. In fact, whoever pays gets the accreditation for sustainable fashion.

Small family brands that cannot afford to pay for certifications are left out, giving the impression that they are unethical or unsustainable. Meanwhile, giant multinationals acquire certificate after certificate. You can take a few steps to ensure that the clothing you purchase has not been "greenwashed."

- Verify whether the certificate's issuer is a private or public company.
- Examine the origin of the materials used in your product.
- Determine whether your philosophy aligns with that of the brand.
- How does the company feel about the direction of fashion?
- Determine whether the company is represented on websites with special sections for antique apparel and eco-friendly fashion.
- Lastly, inquire about the materials used and observe how forthcoming and responsive the company is. It doesn't matter how many sustainable credentials they have if you don't get a response.

What Can We Do To Support Eco-Friendly Fashion: Being conscious of the effects our fashion consumption has on the environment is our first responsibility in promoting sustainable fashion. You should be aware of the most well-known sustainable fashion examples by now, such as ethical, slow, vegan, eco-friendly, fair trade, recycled, upcycled, and so forth. You also learned about the top 10 sustainable fashion brands now operating, which you can support and believe in.

As you continue to browse and shop, be sure the companies you patronise are reducing their adverse effects on the environment while enhancing the working conditions of their employees. Verify the brand's sustainability; just because they sell vegan handbags or vegan leather coats does not imply that they are likewise environmentally beneficial. By fixing, remaking, upcycling, and recycling your things, you may lengthen the lifespan of your apparel and accessories.

Purchase apparel from environmentally conscious retailers who value the planet's natural resources, ecosystem, and biodiversity and from companies that perform all stages of production and recycling using carbon dioxide-free, renewable energy sources like wind, sun, and ocean.

14.4 The 5 R's of Fashion:

Given that the fashion sector has a significant environmental impact, we have witnessed a rising trend in consumer awareness of the results of our purchasing decisions. More readily available information has increased the demand on brands to perform better. What can consumers do to help, then, while brands are busy examining their role in all of this? The catchy alliteration at the centre of this shift, which can get you going, has a lot to recommend it. Hill, Madeleine. (2021) explains the 5 R's of fashion i.e. reduce, reuse, recycle, repair, and resell as follows:

Reduce: This "R" offers a plethora of advantages, and the benefits are immediately apparent. The act of decluttering has been around for years, despite being difficult (and frequently a gradual process), especially as we become more aware of the terrible effects consumerism is having on the environment, people, and animals. Marie Kondo is a wellknown name in the decluttering and reduction space. Her principles and philosophy provide a helpful place to start when trying to cut back on your spending and your wardrobe, and she also provides great advice on how to keep everything organised and make the most of what you already have. As a result, you will buy less than you otherwise would. Thousands of tonnes of clothing are disposed of in landfills every day, thus this is crucial to lowering your fashion impact. Not only will you gain from the money you save and the extra room you make, but you'll also enjoy a lot of benefits from avoiding choice fatigue. This has been the case for many prominent people, like Barack Obama, who only ever dresses in grey or blue suits to concentrate his "decision making energies." Reducing expands beyond clothing and your wardrobe and forces you to consider other aspects of your life as well. Asking yourself, "When did I last wear this?" is a good exercise. The solution should make it easier to decide what should stay and what should go, as well as if the garment has served its purpose. And by "go," we don't mean "into the garbage," but rather "to a buddy" or "to the neighbourhood charity drop off."

Rewear: Fashion's waste-related effects are a significant source of worry and a significant factor in the ongoing pollution of our world. According to a recent study, 95% of the textiles that are disposed of in landfills annually might be recycled (particularly with increasing technological developments). In terms of resource usage, including the use of water, waste, clearance of land, materials, and other resources, the fashion sector is also among the most intense. Reusing clothing now is crucial for reducing your fashion footprint, thus we need to normalise the practise. We already have so many items in our wardrobes, many of which we adore, so it makes sense that we would want to wear them repeatedly. There's nothing wrong with wearing the same clothes more than once, and we shouldn't be shy about doing so. especially if it's that adorable outfit or top that perfectly complemented you. It can be a simple and enjoyable mental adjustment in a variety of ways. You can experiment with new pairings and look for inventive methods to, for example, bring back that favourite item that has been gathering dust for six months once you have reduced the size of your wardrobe and your frequency of purchasing and are aware of everything you own. Investing in higherquality, long-lasting apparel that you can wear repeatedly is a key piece of this puzzle. Basically, adopting a slow fashion philosophy as opposed to the problematic fast fashion, which greatly contributes to the greenhouse gas emissions of the fashion sector. A great starting point for finding clothing that will last longer is a resource like Good On You, which gives you the assurance that the clothing was sourced ethically and won't hurt the environment, people, or animals. Participating in clothes exchanges with friends is another fantastic way to have fun while making use of what you already have in your wardrobe as part of recycling (or what your bestie has in theirs). Giving your old garments a sense of novelty by exchanging them with a friend every few months can encourage your pals to reduce and reuse as well.

Recycle: A lot of us want to start over and purge our closets when new years or seasons approach. What, though, should you do with that worn-out dress? It will end up in a landfill if you dump it in the garbage, so you can't. Why not reuse your old clothing then? Traditional Indian society is mastered in recycling and reusing the clothes but new generation somehow following the path of modern western cultures. But these countries are becoming pro in this field, as many business ventures started doing recycling on behalf of public, so if your item cannot be salvaged, you can donate it to one of the following businesses, which will recycle it for you like Patagonia with their Worn Wear initiative. Used Patagonia clothing in good condition and working order is accepted by the company. You can receive credit toward purchases at Patagonia retail locations, on WornWear.com, and on Patagonia.com when you trade in your high-quality, well-used Patagonia gear. Swedish Stockings can handle all of your nylon waste. In order to fill the fibreglass tanks used in the business sector to separate grease from water, the brand currently collects and grinds up used pantyhose. Collect three or more pairs of synthetic pantyhose from any brand, and send them in to be a part of this amazing sustainable process. The "Good" American underwear company Knickey has a recycling programme for used underwear. Your intimates will be carefully recycled and kept out of the landfill thanks to a collaboration between the company and a small NYC non-profit. The underwear is separated based on the fibre content, processed to create a new fibre, and then recycled to generate rug pads and insulation. Therefore, send them your intimates who are prepared to retire, and they will take care of them. With the help of Nike Grind, the Reuse-A-Shoe programme recycles athletic shoes. Simply drop off your used Nike retail sneakers at a participating location in North America or Europe. Developed by Nike, Nike Grind is a

collection of recycled materials made up of pre-consumer production waste, recycled post-consumer shoes from the Reuse-A-Shoe programme, and unsaleable footwear. Or you may discover uses for these once-cherished goods, including turning cotton t-shirts into grocery bags, headbands, cushion covers, or makeup removal pads.

Repair: Older generations were all too familiar with mending, restoring, and salvaging but has a new perspective on commerce and fashion jeopardised this useful hobby? Using your inner granny to come up with inventive ways to repair, sew, and prolong the life of your item is a great approach to minimise your fashion impact at this stage. Repairing your shoes can be as straightforward as stitching up a hole or as involved as having the soles replaced by a professional cobbler. These two procedures each take no longer than 20 minutes and can extend the life of garments by at least two years. In fact, extending the lifespan of our apparel from one to two years reduces the carbon footprint of those items by 24%. This method saves you the money and effort it would have taken to replace your fashion items while giving them a new lease on life. A portable sewing kit is a must-have, and once you get into the habit of using it, you'll find yourself pulling it out more frequently than you anticipated. Additionally, you'll find yourself considering fixes for problems, from expert adjustments to simple patches. For instance, turning a dress from a previous era into a current top. This contributes to the cost-saving advantages of this revision of your fashion footprint. Finding a local expert who understands what they're doing is a terrific way to salvage your clothes and support local craftsmen at the same time if you still love a piece but it no longer fits properly or needs mending or alteration beyond your skill set.

Resell: Have you discovered any goods you are prepared to part with? Don't worry; it's now simpler and more accessible than ever to sell your used items. There are many online marketplaces where you may sell your used (or new) clothing, including eBay, Gumtree, and Facebook Marketplace, which is a well-liked site for fashion.

14.5 Initiatives Taken by Government of India for Sustainable Fashion:

On Sustainable Fashion Day at Lakmé Fashion Week (2019), Union Textiles Minister introduces Project SURE. The Sustainability Resolution passed today embodies the Mahatma's advice to "be the change you wish to see in the world": Ministery of Textiles. The main effort by the Indian apparel industry to transition to sustainable fashion is called Project SU.RE. At the Lakmé Fashion Winter/Festive 2019 in Mumbai on August 22, 2019, the Union Minister for Textiles, Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani, introduced Project SU.RE, a step toward sustainable fashion. India's apparel industry has pledged to provide a sustainable route for the country's fashion sector with the SU.RE initiative. The industry has firmly committed to moving toward fashion that helps the environment by adopting the acronym SU.RE, which stands for "Sustainable Resolution." The Minister, the United Nations in India, the Clothing Manufacturers Association of India (CMAI), and IMG Reliance, the Lakmé Fashion Week organisers, have all joined forces to begin the project. The Textiles Minister addressed the crowd and stated, "As a patriotic Indian, I am here today to witness history. I would want to inform the UN that this is now achievable as a result of industry initiative, IMG Reliance, and Lakme Fashion Week. Mahatma Gandhi asked us to be the change we wanted to see in the world, and we are commemorating his 150th birthday. That very idea is reflected in the sustainability resolution that is being accepted today.

16 of India's top brands have never before joined forces to protect the environment. The 16 signatories to the resolution collectively have an industrial value of almost 30,000 crore rupees. We must consume carefully with whatever we consume. The action taken today promotes sensible business practises in addition to ethical business practises. According to the Sustainability Report 2018, customers view sustainability as the fourth factor when making purchasing decisions. I appreciate the UN's presence here in India helping to support this effort. Best wishes for this blending and convergence of wholly Indian intellect.

The president of the Indian Clothing Manufacturers Association, Rahul Mehta, stated: "In the past, our sector used a number of materials and procedures that were not environmentally friendly. The commitment by the Indian apparel industry, particularly the signatories, to transition to sustainable fashion is a remarkably responsible and timely action. We at CMAI are proud to be a part of and a driving force behind this extremely important Resolution. Sixteen of India's top fashion and retail brands, including Future Group, Shopper's Stop, Aditya Birla Retail, Arvind Brands, Lifestyle, Max, Raymond, House of Anita Dongre, W, Biba, Westside, 109F, Spykar, Levi's, Bestsellers, and Trends, have signed the pledge for project SU.RE as leaders and representatives of the industry. By 2025, the signatories promise to source/use a sizable share of their total consumption from sustainable raw materials and production methods.

"The future of design is first and foremost about design with a future," said Renata Lok-Dessallien, Resident Coordinator for the United Nations in India. The fashion sector will continue to struggle if its supply networks are not sustainable. Through the whole value chain of clothing production, Project SU.RE initiates a new dialogue to hasten tangible actions for sustainability and climate action and lower environmental costs. I commend the 30 brands and businesses that have joined Project SU.RE."

"This is a culmination of our stated ambition towards making sustainability a mainstream conversation," said Mr. Jaspreet Chandok, Vice President and Head of Fashion at IMG Reliance. We expect that over the next five years, as big retailers move toward adopting sustainability at their core, considerable change will come about as a result of our project, which will be the beginning of a movement with the potential to have a huge influence.

About Project SU.RE:

The five-point Sustainable Resolution is as follows:

- a. Develop a complete understanding of the environmental impact of the garments being currently produced by our brand.
- b. Develop a sustainable sourcing policy for consistently prioritizing and utilizing certified raw materials that have a positive impact on the environment.
- c. Make the right decisions about how, where, and what we source across the value chain by selecting sustainable and renewable materials and processes and ensuring their traceability.
- d. Communicate our sustainability initiatives effectively to consumers and media through our online and physical stores, product tags/labeling, social media, advertising campaigns and events.

e. Through these actions, shift a significant percentage of our supply chain to a sustainable chain by the year 2025, addressing critical global issues such as climate change, contributing to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and building a world that is safe for the future generations, as an acceptance of a responsibility we all share.

The garment supply chain's many stakeholders and producers will receive a clear message from this pledge, which will also drive a more comprehensive sustainable production strategy that lessens its negative effects on the social and environmental spheres. It will cater to the demands of an increasingly aware consumer who would rather purchase from a company that is ecologically aware and actively works to safeguard the environment. Additionally, it will emphasise how crucial industry-wide cooperation is to fostering innovation and revolutionary change. The UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030, particularly SDG-12 for responsible consumption and production, are the focus of Project SU.RE.

The first comprehensive effort by the garment industry towards gradually introducing a broader framework for creating important sustainability targets for the sector will be Project SU.RE, led by the main industry association CMAI and a leader in sustainable fashion IMG Reliance. To meet long-term sustainability goals, the industry would benefit from using this framework to cut carbon emissions, improve resource efficiency, address waste and water management, and have a good social impact. Lenzing EcoVero (which stands for environmentally responsible production of viscose fibre made from the renewable and certified raw material wood) and R Elan, which produces Green Gold fibre made from 100% used PET bottles and has one of the lowest carbon footprints globally, supported the launch of project SU.RE at Lakme Fashion Week.

Therefore we can say that making commitments or challenges for yourself is a helpful method to maintain motivation and devotion to this process while taking into account these suggestions and the enjoyable task ahead. There are lots of reasons for the positive impact people can have by changing their own behaviours to lessen their fashion footprint and providing a good example for others to follow. A growing number of firms and conscious customers are now switching to sustainable fashion as wearing eco-friendly green and sustainable fashion clothing won't hurt consumers as well as our precious planet earth.

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