

SUSTAINABLE FASHION – PART I

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Sustainable fashion is defined as clothing, shoes and accessories that are manufactured and used in the most sustainable manner possible, taking into account environmental and socio-economic aspects. Sustainable fashion is also termed as eco fashion.

Why does Sustainable Fashion matter ?

Sustainable fashion not only serves as an eco solution, but also possess merits such as:

- Increases lifecycle of materials
- Increases the value of garments
- Reduced wastages
- Increases awareness to practice environmental friendly consumptions.

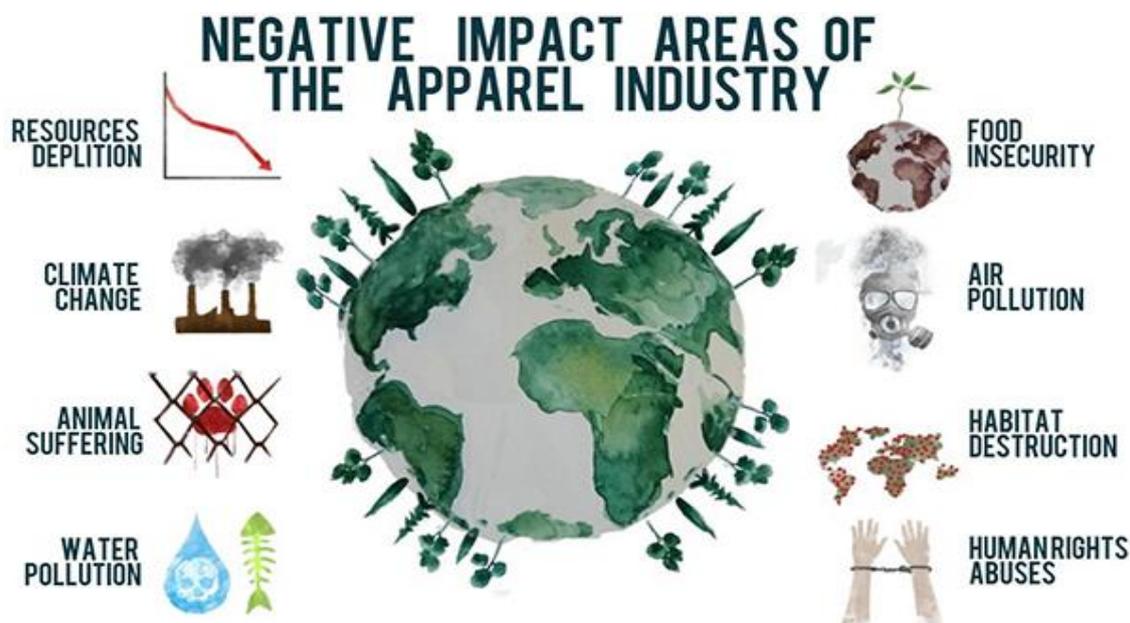


Fig. 1- Negative Impact Areas Of The Apparel Industry

The clothing industry has an impact on the environment. Globalization has made it possible to produce clothing at increasingly lower prices, prices so low that many consumers consider this clothing to be disposable. This creates fast fashion. Fast fashion adds to pollution and generates potential environmental and occupational hazards.

a) Occupational Hazards

Global competition in the garment industry creates poor working conditions for many laborers in developing nations. Developing countries aim to become a part of the world’s apparel market despite poor working conditions and low pay.

b) Environmental Hazards

The clothing industry has one of the highest impacts on the planet. High water usage, pollution from chemical treatments used in dyeing and preparation and the disposal of large amounts of unsold clothing through incineration or landfill deposits are hazardous to the environment. Growing water scarcity is very concerning because textile production mostly takes place in areas of fresh water stress. Only around 20% of clothing is recycled or reused, huge amounts of fashion product end up as waste in landfills. At least 8,000 chemicals are used to produce different textile materials and 25% of the world's pesticides are used to grow non-organic cotton. These factors cause irreversible damage to people and the environment.



Introduction of Sustainable Fashion

Sustainable fashion arrived in the 1940's, the fashion was designed to reduce the amount of fabric needed to make clothes and aimed to reduce fabric wastages.

Later Sustainable fashion was implemented again in the 1980s-90s by Patagonia and ESPRIT. Patagonia, worked on cotton, wool, nylon and polyester, whereas ESPRIT focused on cotton. The work of these companies inspired a whole movement in fashion and sustainability.

ESPRIT eco collection was launched in 1992. It comprised of organic cotton, recycled wool, naturally processed wool, naturally colored cotton etc.

Throughout the 1990s and the early 2000s, the movement of sustainable fashion broadened to include many brands.

Presently, all major clothing companies are working in the area of sustainability. Many leading brands are focusing on creating long-lasting styles.

There are continuous developments to improve all stages of the product's life cycle, from design, raw material production, manufacturing, transport, storage, marketing and final sale, to use, reuse, repair, remake and recycling of the product and its components.

To be continued...

Wishing you a great week ahead!

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