



Including the textile industry in the creation of the legally binding instrument on plastic pollution

When it comes to achieving circularity to significantly reduce plastic pollution, the textile industry is relevant to be included, as it presents significant challenges regarding production and disposal of garments. Each year 342 million barrels of petroleum are used to produce plastic-based fibres; at the same time plastic-based fibres are responsible for 73 per cent of microfibre pollution in Arctic waters.ⁱ

As the amount of new textiles being produced and purchased is increasing considerably, the number of times consumers wear their items before discarding them decreases constantly. In general, clothes are worn for shorter periods of times and most times discarded without handing them to new owners resulting in masses of plastic-based textile waste. The following points provide three approaches for solutions that can be implemented and measured effectively.

Firstly, the aspect of circularity must be included at the very beginning of the production process. Only if the aspect of end-of-life is considered already during the design of the garment, the product can be created to be efficiently reused and recycled after the wearable stage. Therefore, circular fashion experts should be collaborating with designers throughout the whole textile creation process.

Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that recycling processes require in most cases transport, the application of further potentially hazardous chemicals, water and energy and an increase in CO2 emissions. Thus, the first step should always be a focus on reuse instead of recycling. Solutions like clothes swapping, rental and second-hand sale present such solutions.

Finally, unsustainable consumer behaviour is a result of a lack of understanding, misleading information, and greenwashing. Effective and accessible education and training are essential to encourage people to choose alternatives that are not only better for the environment but also present advantages for themselves.

Now more than ever, we recognise that overcoming presented challenges and achieving our goals requires a collaborative effort by all stakeholders. We are pleased to be part of these discussions and available for effective collaboration.

Contact

Lucia Lea Kirchner

Founder

UnButton Fashion

Email: lucia@unbuttonfashion.com

Website: www.unbuttonfashion.com

ⁱ Source: Ellen MacArthur Foundation