

# Sustainability Trend Guide for Fashion Business

Fall–Winter 2024

**BCome** ·

# 10

## Sustainability trends for Fall–Winter 2024

It's time to get ready for the major trends that will shape the future of fashion this Fall–Winter 2024. From the impacts of the EU elections on fashion to the current behavioral crisis, the industry will face 10 significant challenges that professionals must address in the coming months. Learn everything your business needs to know for the upcoming season.

"When a trend becomes dominant and requires us to adapt to new circumstances for long-term survival, it creates a new reality. This new reality demands a new way of doing things, making the old systems irrelevant"

Alba Garcia & Anna Cañadell, Founders of BCome

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## 01 Explore the impact of the EU elections on fashion

Last June, Europe held elections for the European Parliament. All initiatives proposed under the Green Deal over the past five years are now in limbo, awaiting the actions of the new government. The previous term witnessed an acceleration of sustainability policies in Europe, which aims to achieve climate neutrality by 2050 and foster a sustainable, circular economy. The outcome of these elections will determine the level of ambition for the green agenda and sustainability-related legislative processes moving forward.

# 01 Explore the impact of the EU elections on fashion

## Highlights

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- **Prepare for a shift in focus.** Conversations in Parliament may shift towards enhancing the competitiveness of EU companies, prioritizing this over the EU's climate targets.
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- **There is hope for the Green Deal.** Negotiations over EU's sustainability plans and ambitions between EPP and Greens could shape future Green Deal commitments, influencing fashion industry practices and standards.
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- **Far-right influence.** Despite electoral gains, far-right parties' limited majority in EU Parliament restricts direct legislative impact, ensuring continuity of current regulatory frameworks affecting fashion's market access and sustainability goals.
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## Key actions to take

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- **Stay informed and engaged.** Continuously monitor developments in EU Parliament discussions and decisions related to regulatory frameworks affecting fashion.
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- **Adapt your business strategies.** Evaluate your supply chain practices and operational processes to align with evolving EU policies on climate and sustainability.
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- **Educate and train.** Invest in training for employees on sustainability practices and compliance with EU regulations. Equip teams with the knowledge and skills to navigate changes effectively.
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# 01 Explore the impact of the EU elections on fashion

Expand your knowledge through curated content:



[2024 EU Elections: Understanding The Outcomes and What Happens Next](#), **Ohana Public Affairs**



[Election Reflection: The Impact of 2024 European Elections on the Textiles Industry](#), **Global Fashion Agenda**



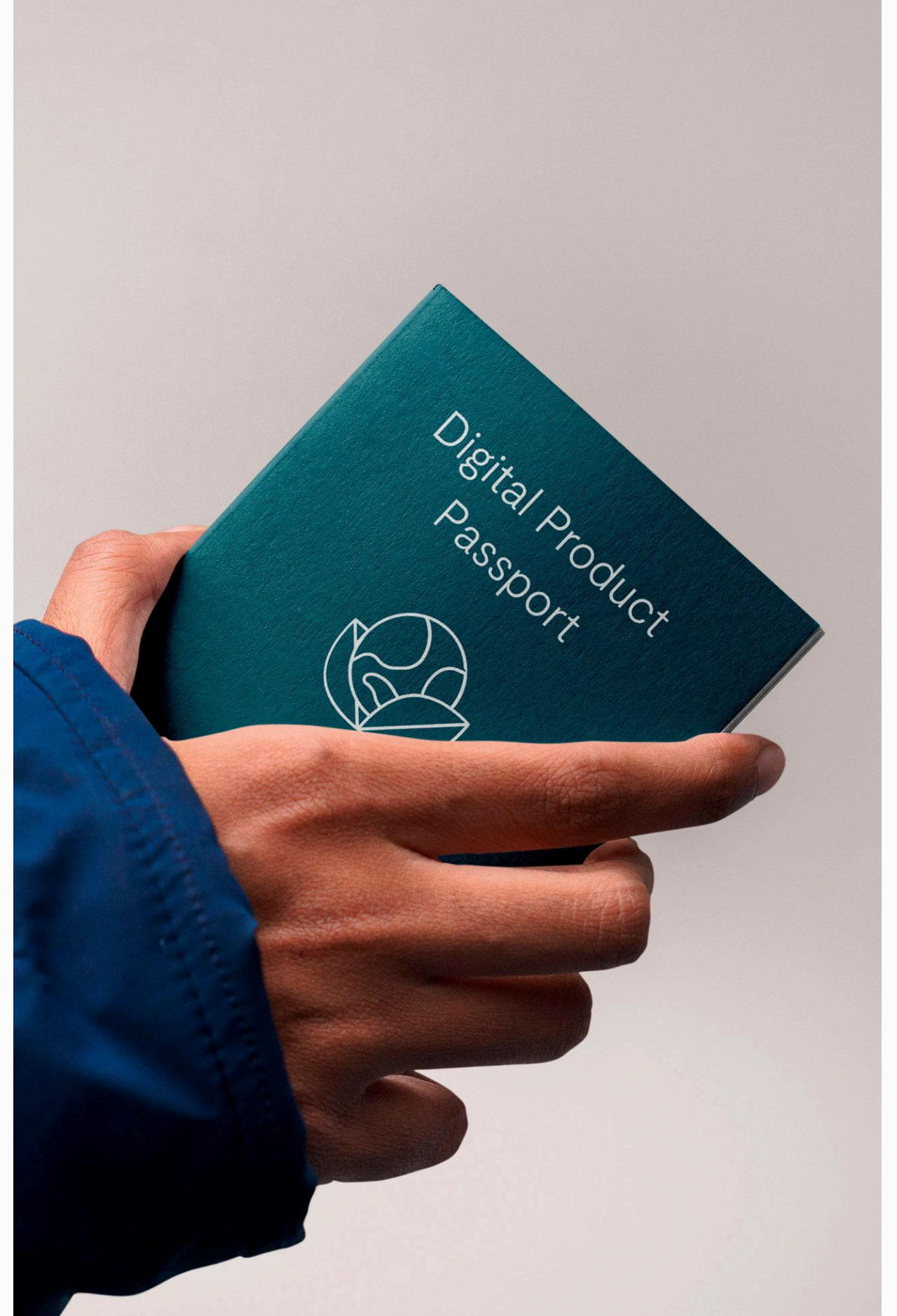
[What the F\\*\\*\\* Just Happened - EU Election Recap](#), **The EU Elections Podcast**

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## 02 Learn about the updates of the Digital Product Passport

The Digital Product Passport has been widely discussed in recent months. It's seen as a groundbreaking innovation that promises complete transparency in the fashion industry. But what exactly do we know about this innovative tool? The Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation has established the foundation for what a DPP entails, yet its definition remains an ongoing process.



## 02 Learn about the updates of the Digital Product Passport

### Highlights

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- **Technology at the service of transparency.** The DPP aims to make supply chains more sustainable and enable consumers to make informed decisions through the digital recording of each product's characteristics throughout its entire life cycle.
  - **Essential for operating in the European market.** The tool will apply to all products marketed in the EU, regardless of whether they are produced within or outside the Union.
  - **Up to 16 categories of information.** It consists of a digital record of the key product characteristics throughout its lifecycle, including up to 16 categories of information such as product origin, material composition, environmental impact, etc. The specific set of indicators that the Digital Product Passport will need to collect in the fashion industry is still being defined.
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### Key actions to take

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- **Monitor announcements from regulatory bodies.** Educate yourself on how the DPP will impact your products and operations. Understand how these 16 categories of information will be defined and measured in the context of fashion products.
  - **Collaborate for data management systems.** Find the right partners who can help you easily capture, store, and share the required product information in compliance with regulations.
  - **Engage with suppliers.** Collaborate closely with your suppliers to ensure they also understand and comply with DPP requirements. Transparency and cooperation throughout the supply chain will be crucial for successful implementation.
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## 02 Learn about the updates of the Digital Product Passport

Expand your knowledge through curated content:



[Digital Product Passport in the textile sector, European Parliament](#)



[Online information session on the new Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation \(ESPR\), European Commission](#)



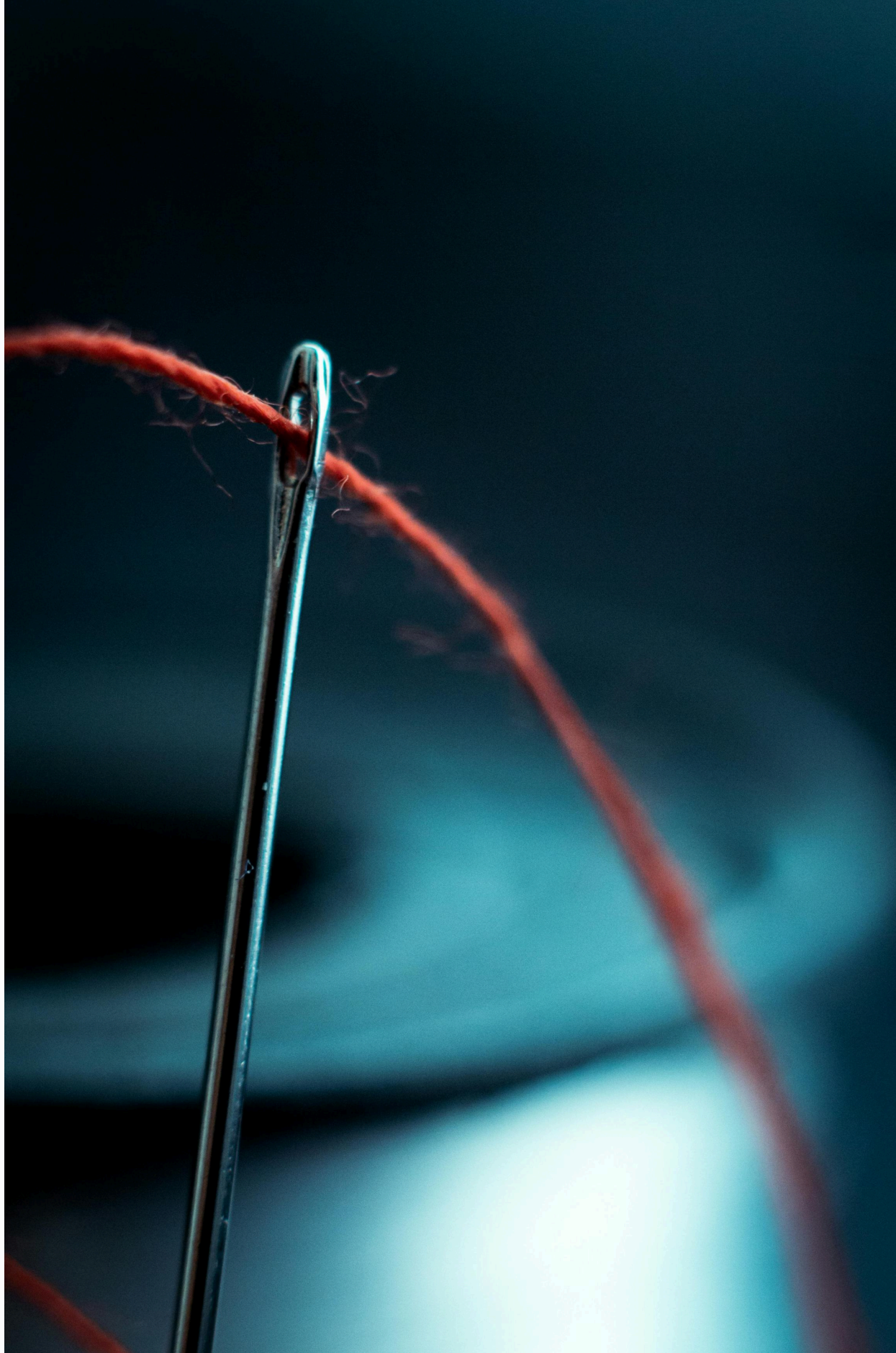
[Legislation to implementation: ESPR and Digital Product Passports, Innovation Forum podcast](#)

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“The connection between the brand and the customer doesn't end at the point of sale; rather, it marks the start of the customer's journey with the product. The brand aims to establish an ongoing relationship through customer service, gaining insights into customer needs, delivering value, and monetizing the product throughout its second and third life cycles. In this context, the Digital Product Passport essentially serves as the next-generation receipt”

Natasha Franck, Founder and CEO of EON for [FashionUnited](#)



## 03 Follow the guidance of the repair initiative

Each year, over 100 million tons of textile waste are discarded, with the average garment worn only about 10 times. In terms of impact that results in more than 4 billion tons of CO2 emissions from textile waste ending up in landfills. The pressure from Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR), which aims for products to be more durable, repairable, and recyclable, has prompted fashion brands to step up in creating repair programs that extend the lifespan of their products.



# 03 Follow the guidance of the repair initiative

## Highlights

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- **Change driven by the ESPR.** The Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR) introduces measures to make textiles easier to repair, provides clear information on repair options, and bans the destruction of unsold textiles.
  - **Top brands are leading the way in repairs.** Fashion brands like [Veja](#) and [Nudie Jeans](#) are at the forefront of this movement by creating "repair stations" where they offer repairs to extend the lifespan of their products.
  - **Initiatives to facilitate the scalability of repairs.** For brands that don't have their own repair program, platforms like [SOJO](#) and [Circulo](#) make it easier to scale this service through technological solutions.
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## Key actions to take

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- **Develop repair programs.** Look at leading brands for inspiration or collaborate with repair platforms to provide repair options to your customers without the need to build an in-house program.
  - **Educate your customers.** Provide clear and accessible information on how they can get their items repaired, emphasizing the benefits of extending the life of their garments.
  - **Monitor and evaluate.** Regularly assess the effectiveness of your repair initiatives. Gather feedback from customers, monitor the number of items being repaired, and evaluate the impact on product lifespan and environmental benefits.
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## 03 Follow the guidance of the repair initiative

Expand your knowledge through curated content:



[A closer look at the upcoming EU's Right to Repair legislation and its impact on fashion, FashionUnited](#)



[A full renewal for the V-10, Veja](#)



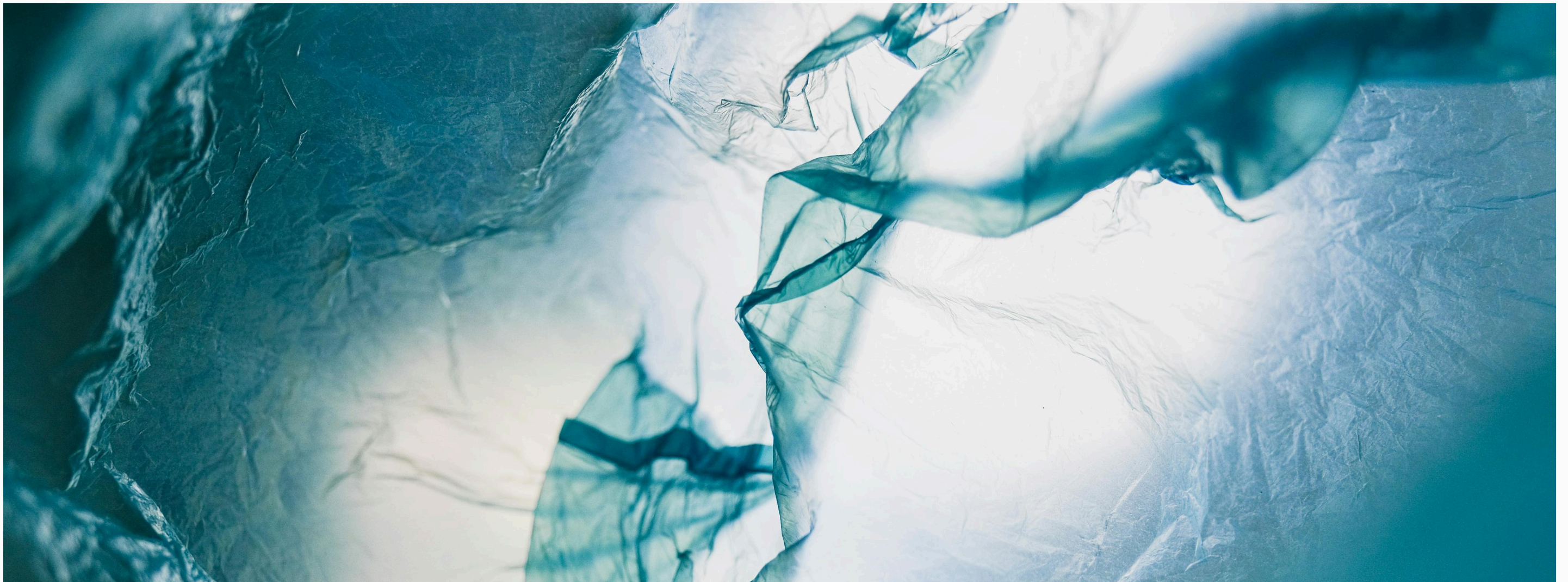
[Making Mending Great Again, Wardrobe Crisis](#)

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## 04 Delve into strategies for scaling recycling

The vast amount of discarded clothing and the growing shortage of raw materials for creating new textiles make it crucial to explore alternative methods for generating fibers that prioritize existing resources. While textile-to-textile recycling is making progress, less than 1% of textiles are currently recycled fiber-to-fiber on a global scale. This extremely low percentage underscores the significant challenge of scaling up textile recycling efforts.





# 04 Delve into strategies for scaling recycling

## Highlights

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- **Chemical recycling as the great hope.** This method could recycle up to 70% of textile waste. New solvents and advanced depolymerization technologies aim to improve sustainability. Innovations also focus on recycling fiber blends and exploring chemical upcycling to transform waste into valuable materials.
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- **Advancements in mechanical recycling.** Improvements include new separation technologies to enhance recycled material quality and reduce chemical use. Techniques like shredding, fiber opening, and spinning are optimized for higher-quality recycled fibers.
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- **The major challenge of scalability.** Investing in R&D, creating suitable infrastructure, adopting circular design principles, implementing incentives, and educating consumers are key to achieving large-scale textile recycling.
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## Key actions to take

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- **Invest in R&D.** Allocate resources to explore and develop new technologies and processes. This includes supporting existing companies dedicated to researching innovation in textile-to-textile recycling.
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- **Adopt ecodesign principles.** Design garments with recyclability in mind. Explore ways to minimize waste during production and ensure products are designed for longevity and recyclability.
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- **Implement incentives and educate consumers.** This could include partnerships with recycling facilities or initiatives that offer incentives for consumers to return used garments for recycling.
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## 04 Delve into strategies for scaling recycling

Expand your knowledge through curated content:



[Scaling textile recycling in Europe—turning waste into value, McKinsey & Company](#)



[Can we really recycle our old clothes?, DW Planet A](#)



[Pushing the boundaries of EPR policy for textiles, The Circular Economy Show by Ellen MacArthur Foundation](#)

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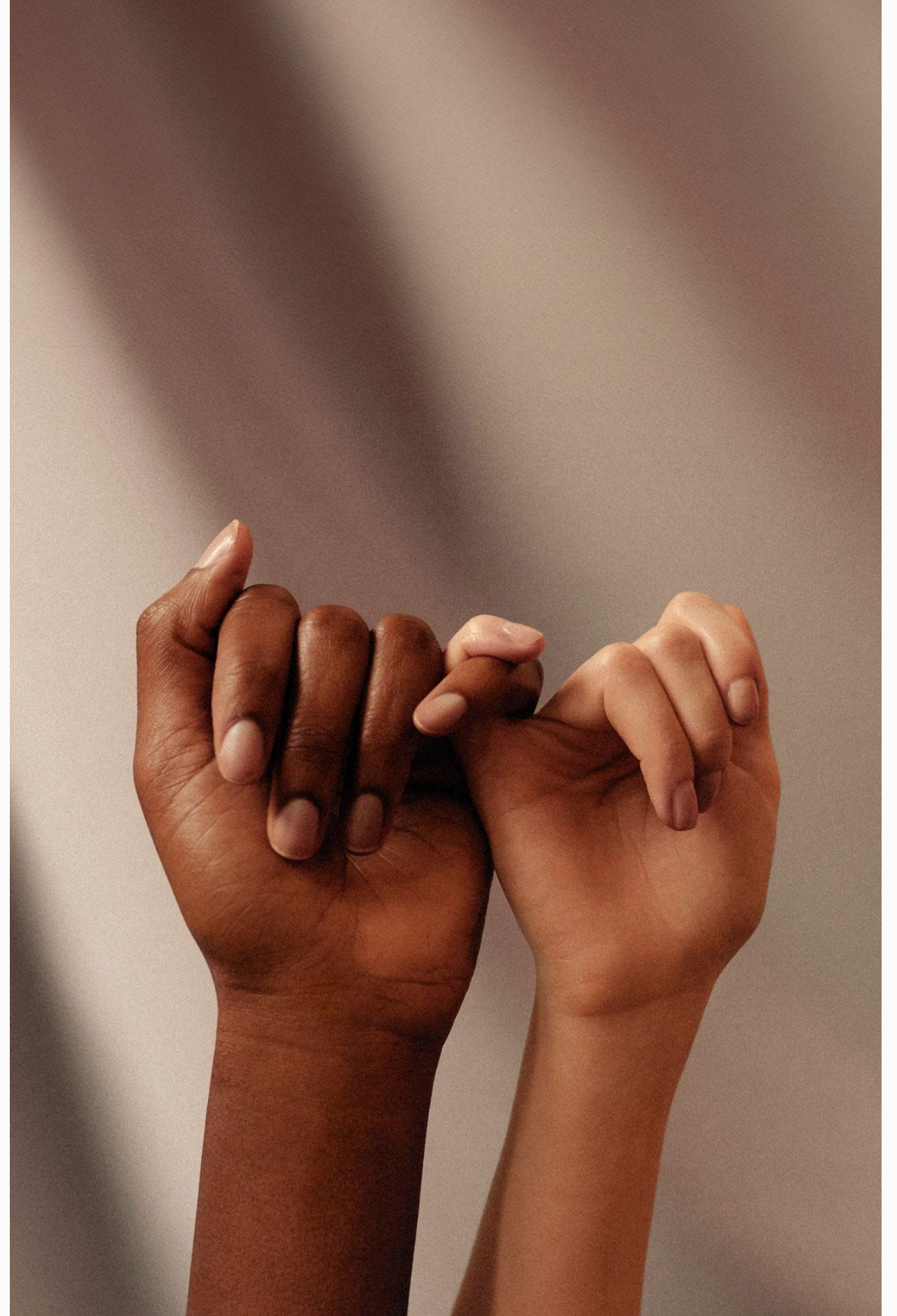
“Textile recycling cannot function effectively at a small scale. Brands are the ones creating demand and the demand is not enough if they use recycled materials only in small capsule collections. Companies need to be making recycled materials a core to their fibre portfolio”

Ana Rodes, Head of Sustainability at Recover, for Global Fashion Summit 2024



## 05 Find out all about collaborations to go further

The saying goes, "if you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together", and the fashion industry understands this perfectly. It's no surprise that an increasing number of textile groups are investing heavily in startups focused on textile innovation like [Syre](#) or [Infinited Fiber Company](#). Securing the survival and prosperity of these suppliers is key to ensuring a bright future for the brands.



# 05 Find out all about collaborations to go further

## Highlights

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- **Major brands found startups.** After Renewcell's bankruptcy, Syre, the textile recycling startup founded by H&M Group earlier this year, secured \$100 million. Syre aims to mass-produce textile-to-textile recycled materials, offering a closed-loop solution.
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- **Textile giants become majority shareholders.** In the first half of 2024, Inditex participated in the latest investment round of the Finnish company specialized in recycling cotton-rich textile waste, Infinited Fiber, in which Inditex has directly become a majority shareholder.
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- **The Future Supplier Initiative.** Brands like Bestseller, Gap or Mango have launched The Future Supplier Initiative. This initiative aims to provide funding and technical support to suppliers to accelerate progress toward science-based targets.
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## Key actions to take

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- **Explore startup opportunities.** As a fashion professional, you should stay informed about emerging startups in the industry and explore opportunities for collaboration or investment.
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- **Monitor investment prospects.** Keep an eye on investment opportunities that align with your sustainability goals. Understanding the financial and environmental impacts of such investments can be crucial for future business strategies.
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- **Engage in industry collaborations.** Actively seek opportunities to participate in industry collaborations, partnerships, or initiatives that promote sustainable practices and support suppliers in adopting cleaner technologies.
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## 05 Find out all about collaborations to go further

Expand your knowledge through curated content:



[Who Will Finance a More Sustainable Fashion Industry?](#), **The Business of Fashion**



[Supply Chains of the Future | Davos 2024](#), **World Economic Forum**



[The Honest Journey of Scaling a Changemaker Brand](#), **Crash Course Fashion**

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## 06 Embrace sustainability as the new cool, not as a moralistic sh\*t

Consumers are beginning to tire of sustainable marketing campaigns that carry moral undertones. Some brands highlight the pitfalls of ultra-fast fashion to emphasize their own positive actions, while others gain more popularity by making sustainability a central focus of their business, presenting it as attractive without diminishing the efforts of others.

# 06 Embrace sustainability as the new cool, not as a moralistic sh\*t

## Highlights

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- **Some consumers find sustainable marketing annoying.** Recent marketing campaigns by Patagonia and Vestiaire Collective about the cost of overconsumption sparked unfavorable comments from some consumers.
  - **Agree with the message but not with the forms.** While they may agree with the premise that fast-fashion brands are worse for the planet, people are put off by messaging from fashion companies that point fingers at other companies.
  - **Making sustainability appealing.** Brands like Ganni have made sustainability central to their long-term survival while maintaining unique designs. They don't label themselves as sustainable but recognize the contradictions in fashion and sustainability, focusing on continuous improvement.
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## Key actions to take

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- **Avoid moralistic messaging.** Instead of using finger-pointing messages towards other fashion companies, focus on positive narratives that highlight the benefits and appeal of sustainability.
  - **Make sustainability attractive.** Showcase how sustainability enhances your products and brand values, while maintaining the originality and attractiveness of your designs.
  - **Engage with community and values.** Engage with your audience through meaningful dialogues, initiatives, and collaborations that reinforce your brand's commitment to sustainability and resonate with your consumers.
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## 06 Embrace sustainability as the new cool, not as a moralistic sh\*t

Expand your knowledge through curated content:



[The Ganni Playbook: How to Get Started Creating a Responsible Business](#), Ganni



[Designer Gabriela Hearst on the intersection of sustainability and fashion](#), Washington Post Live



[Allbirds on Learning to Lead with Resilience](#), The Business of Fashion Podcast

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“I didn’t want to be the kind of brand that would blossom and then die away in 10 years. You need muscle and scale to be able to sustain a brand over time”

Nicolaj Reffstrup, Founder of Ganni, for [Fast Company](#)



# 07 Redefine growth beyond financial gains

Fashion companies need to grow to survive, but are revenue streams the only metric fashion brands should be measuring to ensure their prosperity? Infinite economic growth is only possible on an economist's graph. On a planet with finite resources and where wealth is concentrated among a small percentage of the population, the goal of increasing revenue year after year starts to become a utopia.



# 07 Redefine growth beyond financial gains

## Highlights

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- **Less purchased garments.** In order to meet fashion’s environmental goals, citizens in high-income countries should only be purchasing five new items of clothing annually, amplifying the need to curb current rates of production and consumption.

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- **Beyond new items.** The most successful brands have diversified their business beyond just selling new items. Services like repair, rental, and resale are gaining ground over new collections.

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- **Non-financial reporting.** The highest-rated fashion companies report much more than just their earnings to their stakeholders. They also communicate their progress in reducing their impact, to increase their value as a business.

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## Key actions to take

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- **Diversify business models.** Move beyond selling new items by offering additional services that can help reduce overproduction and encourage alternative ways of growth.

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- **Enhance transparency and reporting.** Regularly report not only financial earnings but also the company's progress in climate targets.

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- **Shift focus beyond economic metrics.** Integrate environmental, social impact, and ethical practices into business goals and performance evaluations to foster a more holistic approach to growth.

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# 07 Redefine growth beyond financial gains

Expand your knowledge through curated content:



[Is fashion finally ready to cut overproduction?](#) **Vogue Business**



[To Green-growth, Overconsumption & Degrowth](#), **Sustainable Fashion Academy**



[Dr. Jennifer Hinton Thinks Not-for-Profit Business Models Can Help Us Address The Problems of Fast Fashion,](#)  
**Big Closets Small Planet**

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## 08 Remain humble in sustainability practices

In 2023, the term "greenhushing", the practice of silencing the sustainable features of a product, gained popularity among fashion brands as a cautious approach to avoid accusations of greenwashing. In 2024, with increasing regulatory pressure to substantiate green claims, staying silent is no longer viable. It's time to discuss sustainability with transparency and humility.



# 08 Remain humble in sustainability practices

## Highlights

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- **Nothing is 100% sustainable.** A product can be more or less sustainable, but everything has an impact, even if it's minimal. It's relevant to note that sustainability is a journey, not a destination.
  - **Sustainability begins with transparency.** Only 9% of large companies communicate the full traceability of their products. Without supply chain visibility, a brand's sustainability is questionable.
  - **The goal is to be better than yesterday.** Understanding your impact today to improve it tomorrow is the first step on the path to sustainability. It all comes down to assessing and monitoring progress.
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## Key actions to take

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- **Acknowledge imperfection.** Communicate openly about the challenges and limitations faced in sustainability efforts. This honesty can build credibility and encourage a more realistic and supportive dialogue.
  - **Prioritize transparency.** Assess and monitor the impacts of your actions and share detailed information about your operations to foster trust and accountability.
  - **Be honest about challenges.** Understand your current impact and create actionable steps to improve. Communicate openly about the challenges and limitations faced in sustainability efforts.
-

## 08 Remain humble in sustainability practices

Expand your knowledge through curated content:



[Stopping greenwashing: how the EU regulates green claims](#), **European Parliament**



[Fighting greenwashing: the role of regulations to empower consumers](#), **One Planet Network**



[Reality check: The rise of corporate greenhushing](#), **Innovation Forum podcast**

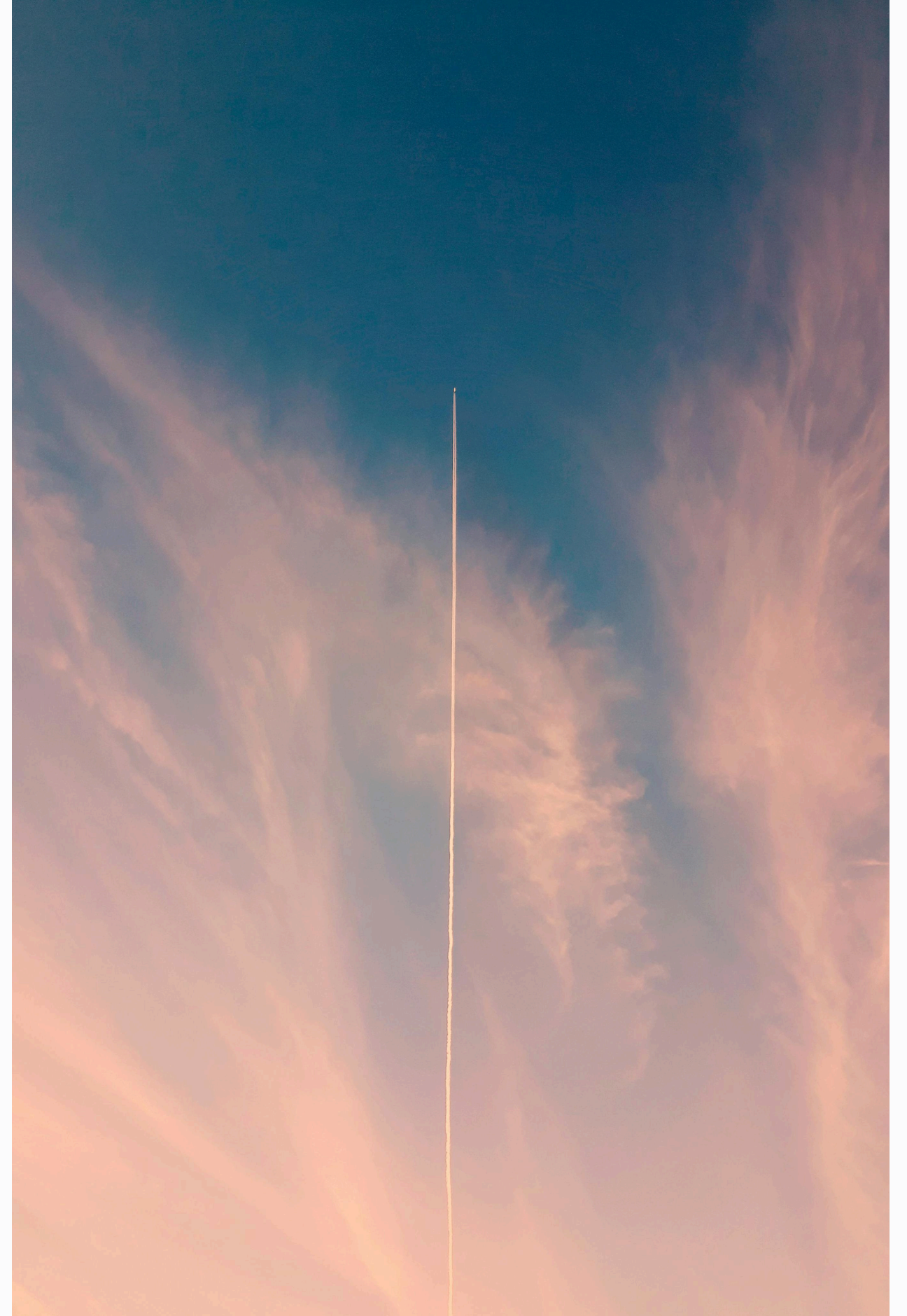
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“People don’t want greenwashing rubbish or overly detailed descriptions of why we have vetted a brand as more sustainable. They want a couple of tangible key points that back up why a brand is better so they can feel comfortable buying into that brand”

Rebecca Morter, founder of Lone Design Club (LDC), for [Vogue Business](#)

## 09 Uncover the decarbonization status of fashion

The fashion industry plays a significant role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, contributing roughly 4% of global emissions. Unfortunately, many brands are falling behind in their decarbonization efforts, with only 37% on track to meet their goals, and some even experiencing rising emissions. Despite these challenges, there is substantial potential for the industry to cut emissions.



# 09 Uncover the decarbonization status of fashion

## Highlights

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- **Ambitious goals for reducing emissions by 2030.** On average, fashion businesses have pledged to cut Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 55% and Scope 3 emissions by around 35% by 2030.
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- **Companies struggle to meet targets.** The current pace of progress suggests the industry will only achieve a reduction of around 35% in total emissions by 2030, falling short of the initial goals.
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- **Offsetting is not the option.** The CEO of SBTi resigned due to the consideration of offsets as valid in emission reduction strategies. While carbon offsetting may seem like a quick solution, it's not the ideal approach for decarbonization.
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## Key actions to take

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- **Revise emission reduction goals.** Assess current emission reduction goals to be more ambitious and achievable and implement measures to accelerate progress.
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- **Develop strategies to tackle Scope 3 emissions.** Which are often the largest part of a fashion brand's carbon footprint. Engage suppliers and partners in emission reduction initiatives.
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- **Invest in innovation.** Explore and invest in innovative technologies and practices that can help achieve deeper emission cuts across operations and supply chains.
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## 09 Uncover the decarbonization status of fashion

Expand your knowledge through curated content:



[Sustainable style: How fashion can afford and accelerate decarbonization](#), McKinsey & Company



[Supply Chain Decarbonization & Durability of Textile Products](#), SGS



[How can carbon markets move beyond offsets to achieve net zero](#), The EY Sustainability Matters podcast

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## 10 Understand the current behavioral crisis

Global clothing consumption has doubled since 2000, with the average garment now being worn half as many times as 15 years ago. It's no coincidence that textile giants like Shein or Temu, known for offering deeply discounted products, have gained ground on fast fashion to create a new category: ultra fast fashion. We are facing a significant behavioral crisis that fuels the growth of businesses contradicting the sustainability of the fashion industry.



# 10 Understand the current behavioral crisis

## Highlights

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- **Fast fashion frenzy.** Companies like Shein or Temu have experienced explosive growth since their launch. They offer cheap, trendy clothing, but this contributes to a cycle of increased consumption and fast disposal of clothes.
  - **Beyond low-income shoppers.** Contrary to popular belief, the primary demographic for Shein includes not only young women but also a significant number of women over 35.
  - **Lack of value perception.** Low prices can make clothing seem disposable, decreasing the value we place on garments and leading to impulse purchases and shorter lifespans.
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## Key actions to take

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- **Promote sustainable consumption.** Encourage consumers to prioritize quality over quantity and invest in durable, timeless pieces rather than fast fashion trends.
  - **Educate on true costs.** Raise awareness about the environmental and social impacts of fashion, highlighting the hidden costs behind prices.
  - **Support circular economy.** Implement or support initiatives that promote circularity in fashion, such as recycling programs, upcycling initiatives or resale platforms.
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# 10 Understand the current behavioral crisis

Expand your knowledge through curated content:



[World scientists' warning: The behavioural crisis driving ecological overshoot](#), **Joseph J Merz**



[How Shein Built a \\$66B Fast-Fashion Empire](#), **The Wall Street Journal**



[Shame won't stop people from buying Shein, but this will](#), **Green Behavior**

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“We buy a lot of things because we have evolutionary impulses to signal certain things about ourselves (and to acquire resources). The fashion industry creates an outlet for those impulses”

Joseph Merz, Chairman of the Merz Institute and senior fellow at the Global Evergreening Alliance, for [Vogue Business](#)

## Curated Content Recap

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[2024 EU Elections: Understanding The Outcomes and What Happens Next](#), **Ohana Public Affairs**

[Digital Product Passport in the textile sector](#), **European Parliament**

[A closer look at the upcoming EU's Right to Repair legislation and its impact on fashion](#), **FashionUnited**

[Scaling textile recycling in Europe—turning waste into value](#), **McKinsey & Company**

[Who Will Finance a More Sustainable Fashion Industry?](#), **The Business of Fashion**

[The Ganni Playbook: How to Get Started Creating a Responsible Business](#), **Ganni**

[Is fashion finally ready to cut overproduction?](#), **Vogue Business**

[Stopping greenwashing: how the EU regulates green claims](#), **European Parliament**

[Sustainable style: How fashion can afford and accelerate decarbonization](#), **McKinsey & Company**

[World scientists' warning: The behavioural crisis driving ecological overshoot](#), **Joseph J Merz**

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[Online information session on the new Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation \(ESPR\)](#), **European Commission**

[A full renewal for the V-10](#), **Veja**

[Can we really recycle our old clothes?](#), **DW Planet A**

[Supply Chains of the Future | Davos 2024](#), **World Economic Forum**

[Designer Gabriela Hearst on the intersection of sustainability and fashion](#), **Washington Post Live**

[To Green-growth, Overconsumption & Degrowth](#), **Sustainable Fashion Academy**

[Fighting greenwashing: the role of regulations to empower consumers](#), **One Planet Network**

[Supply Chain Decarbonization & Durability of Textile Products](#), **SGS**

[How Shein Built a \\$66B Fast-Fashion Empire](#), **The Wall Street Journal**

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## Curated Content Recap

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[What the F\\*\\*\\* Just Happened – EU Election Recap](#), [The EU Elections Podcast](#)

[Legislation to implementation: ESPR and Digital Product Passports](#), [Innovation Forum podcast](#)

[Making Mending Great Again](#), [Wardrobe Crisis](#)

[Pushing the boundaries of EPR policy for textiles](#), [The Circular Economy Show by Ellen MacArthur Foundation](#)[The](#)

[Honest Journey of Scaling a Changemaker Brand](#), [Crash Course Fashion](#)

[Allbirds on Learning to Lead with Resilience](#), [The Business of Fashion Podcast](#)

[Dr. Jennifer Hinton Thinks Not-for-Profit Business Models Can Help Us Address The Problems of Fast Fashion](#),

[Big Closets Small Planet](#)

[Reality check: The rise of corporate greenhushing](#), [Innovation Forum podcast](#)

[How can carbon markets move beyond offsets to achieve net zero](#), [The EY Sustainability Matters podcast](#)

[Shame won't stop people from buying Shein, but this will](#), [Green Behavior](#)



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