

Zara announces sustainability plan that tackles fabric, energy sources, and clothing recycling

Sustainable fashion is a hot topic when it comes to leading luxury brands, and Spanish fast-fashion retailer Zara is looking to take a serious leap forward in that department. [Zara is stepping up its sustainability game](#), and has pledged to ensure its products are made of 100% sustainable fabric in the next few years, by 2025. The company related its lengthy list of environmentally-friendly goals to shareholders at its parent company Inditex's annual meeting on July 16.

In addition to its commitment to sustainable fabric, Zara has made the commitment to begin adding zero waste to landfills from its facilities, and will be working to reach a goal of 80% renewable energy consumption by 2025 as well.

"We need to be a force for change, not only in the company but in the whole sector," said Pablo Isla, CEO of Zara parent company Inditex. "We are the ones establishing these targets: The strength and impulse for change is coming from the commercial team, the people who are working with our suppliers, the people working with fabrics. It is something that's happening inside our company."

Currently, just 20% of Zara's fashion collections are comprised of sustainable fabrics. In an effort to push this number higher, Zara has invested in a new board of directors focused on altering these goals. This would include its sister Inditex brands and every single one of Zara's collections. In case you haven't been keeping track, that's *a lot* of clothing.

When the company succeeds at making itself more sustainable, it's aiming to make sure everyone wins. In fact, according to a [report from WWD](#), Zara's staff's bonus payments are partially tied to their sustainability goals, meaning it literally pays to take care of the environment. And intriguingly, even Zara's website already only uses office buildings and web servers that "only consume energy derived from renewable sources," so the company is looking into every potential avenue, it seems, to make a difference when it comes to its efforts to reduce its footprint.

Zara isn't alone when it comes to this initiative. Previously, luxury brand [Burberry vowed to become carbon neutral by 2022](#), and UNIQLO parent company [Fast Retailing also recently released a statement](#) that it would be cutting its usage of plastic bags by 85% as of 2020. This would mean the company would be eliminating 7,800 tons of plastic waste a year by introducing recyclable packaging.

Sportswear company Adidas and British designer [Stella McCartney's "Infinite hoodie"](#) recently made a splash with a collaboration with the [Seattle-based manufacturer Evrnu](#). It's been heralded as one of the first 100% recyclable pieces of clothing to come from a commercial brand, signifying an intriguing step in the right direction for all the companies involved when it comes to sustainability.

And it couldn't come at a better time. In just one year, the world collectively tosses out a whopping [92 million tons of textile waste](#), which is a number that's swiftly growing. In fact, it could even increase by a disturbing 60% in the next 10 year, according to Evrnu CEO Stacy Flynn. She stated that the company's goal is to "convert that garment waste into new fiber, so that we eliminate the context of waste in the supply chain."

Flynn believes that recycling clothes will make for a reliable way to fill the demand for clothing that continues to rise over the years.

"Right now, it's just a one-way street: We're taking a lot of the resources, but we're not replenishing at the levels that we need to replenish in order for the foundation of the supply chain to be healthy and thriving into the future," she said of Evrnu's initiative to take sustainability seriously. Zara has been treading the same waters, as Inditex [has partnered with MIT](#) in an effort to develop new, high-quality recycled fabrics in a bid to make at least 10 percent of its clothing out of recycled or organic materials. Through this partnership, by 2020 Zara will have invested a cool \$3.5 million in textile recycling tech.

In addition, the company has partnered with additional entities in the past such as Oxfam, The Red Cross, Caritas, and the Salvation Army to work with local retailers in a bid to help shoppers recycle clothing.

With retailers like Zara keeping an eye out for the future when it comes to protecting the environment, it looks like it's time for the rest of the fashion industry to follow suit – literally.