

# BUILDING CIRCULARITY AND SUSTAINABILITY IN THE TEXTILE VALUE CHAIN

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Overview of UNEP activities

# WHAT IS UNEP DOING ON TEXTILES?

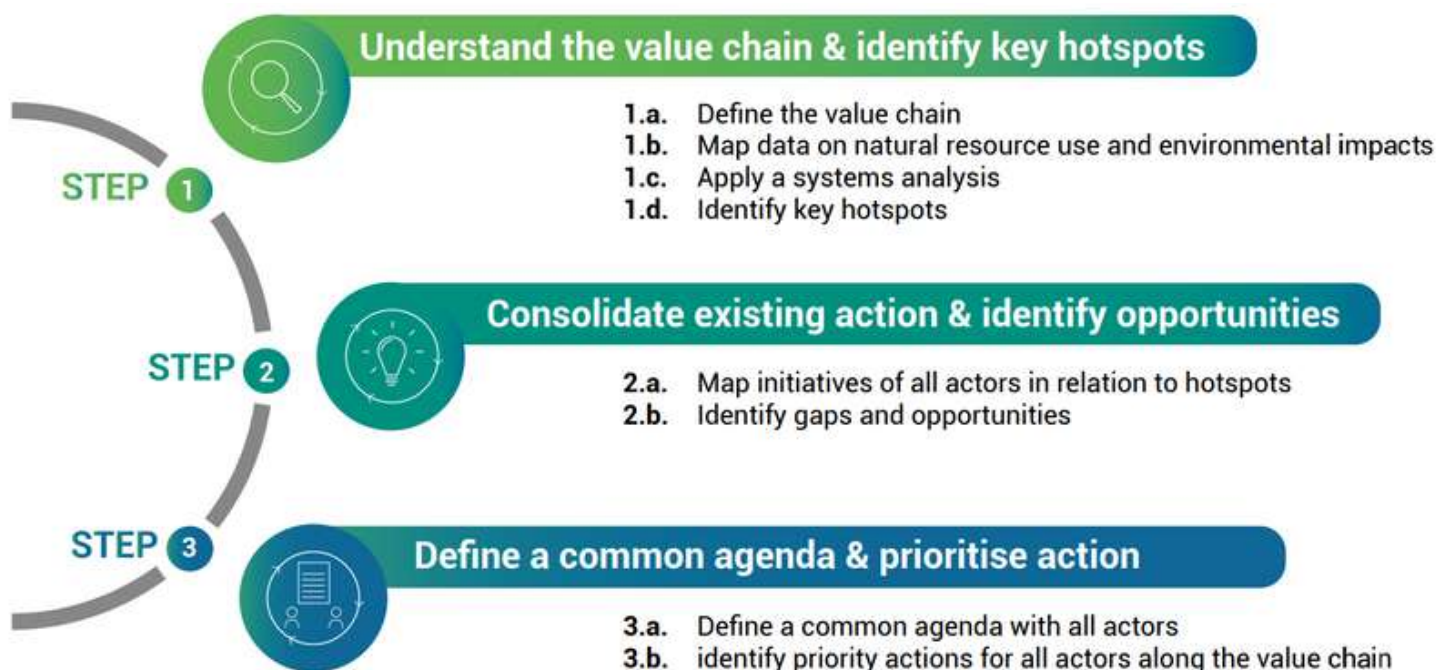
The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) works on providing strategic leadership and encouraging sector-wide collaboration to accelerate a just transition towards a sustainable and circular textile value chain, while supporting sound management of chemicals.

This document provides a short overview of recent and upcoming projects, publications, campaigns, and communication initiatives.

## THE VALUE CHAIN APPROACH

All UNEP textiles work follows a **value chain approach**, a methodology for catalysing science-based policy action. Its purpose is to identify key points of intervention within economic systems to reduce natural resource

use, environmental and socio-economic impacts caused by production and consumption, and to define a common agenda for action. Find out more about the advantages of this approach and how to apply it **here**.



# WHAT HAS HAPPENED SO FAR?



## Consultations and expert community

Since January 2019, UNEP has been leading consultation workshops with stakeholders across the value chain to inform research and define priorities. Workshop participants have also become part of a wider expert community nurtured by UNEP. A newsletter with updates on events and publications in the sustainable textiles space is issued every 4 to 6 weeks.



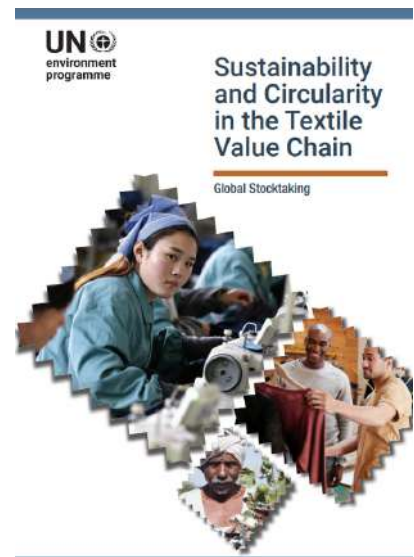
## Sustainable communication strategy

This strategy aims to change the narrative of the sector from one of extraction, exploitation and disposable consumption, towards regeneration, equity and care. It is focused on doing so by increasing consumer awareness, industry accountability and policy breakthroughs. So far, this has led to a new communication commitment added to the upgraded **UNFCCC Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action**.



## Global stocktaking report

UNEP launched a report called **Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile Value Chain - Global Stocktaking**. Following consultations, this report was released in October 2020 and identifies environmental and socio-economic impacts along the value chain, takes stock of initiatives working to address those, and outlines priority action areas.



# WHAT IS COMING UP?



## Textile sector roadmap report

Informed by an ongoing multi-stakeholder consultation process (workshops were held with over 60 experts), the roadmap will identify key prioritised actions that different stakeholder groups should take to drive a just transition towards greater sustainability and circularity in the textile value chain.



## Sustainable fashion consumer playbook

UNEP will produce a guideline outlining what successful sustainable communication looks like for the fashion sector. This will serve as a framework for consumer-facing fashion brands and communicators on how to talk to audiences in a way that aligns messaging with that of the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals. It is in support of a commitment added to the upgraded **UNFCCC Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action** focused on sustainable communication.

## Impact assessment of circular economic models

The assessment will provide evidence of the environmental and socio-economic impacts of the different sustainable economic models in the textiles value chain, to help bridge the science-policy gap and raise awareness on the potential impacts of adopting and fostering innovative sustainable and circular policies and practices

# WHAT ARE OUR PROJECTS?

## Chemicals and Textiles:

### Recent Activities:

The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) secretariat published a report and policy brief in May 2021 called **Engaging the Textile Industry as a Key Sector in SAICM - A Review of PFAS as a Chemical Class in the Textile Sector**. It identifies enabling conditions for improving public health and environment protection in the textiles sector for consideration by stakeholders across the textiles value chain.



### Upcoming Activities:

A GEF-funded project called **Reducing Uses and Releases of Chemicals of Concern, Including Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), in the textiles sector**.

The project is expected to be implemented in Asia between 2022-2027 with selected countries identified as Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Viet Nam.

## Innovative Business Practices and Economic Models in the Textile Value Chain (InTex):

**InTex** is a 3-year (2020-2023) project funded by the European Union

It has two global components:

- Increasing access to and interoperability of environmental and lifecycle data
- Providing evidence of environmental and socio-economic impacts of different sustainable economic models in the textile value chain.

It has three national components in Kenya, South Africa, and Tunisia:

Training for technical intermediaries to support SME understanding of eco-innovation and Product Environmental Footprint (PEF); Implementing sustainable business models and PEF studies; and analysing policies to provide recommendations promoting sustainability in textiles sector.



## West Asia Sustainable Fashion Programme:

Launched in 2020 the programme aims to spread awareness on the industry's environmental impacts while promoting sustainable consumption and production, circularity, as well as conscious and responsible consumer behaviour; also promotes cross-sectoral collaborations to find innovative solutions tackling the threats posed by the industry within the region.

### Recent Activities:

Appointment of designer Rami Kadi as Goodwill Ambassador and launch of the **Designers for the Future Competition** to showcase youth talent in using leftover fabrics to create new pieces to focus on circularity in the industry.



### Upcoming Activities:

The Sustainable Academy will be launched in 2022 to offer courses to both professionals in the field (through collaborations with leading fashion schools in the region) and the general public.

The Rami Kadi X UNEP West Asia initiative will also be developed to emphasise the concept of circularity in fashion by creating a selection of pieces from leftover fabric.

# WHAT ARE OUR PROJECTS?

## UNEP India Sustainable Textiles Initiatives:

In India, UNEP is supporting analysis, documentation, advocacy, and capacity enhancement for promoting sustainability in the textile sector, that also recognises locally-relevant knowledge including the ingrained sustainability in traditional textiles.

Several activities have been initiated, including the Circular Design Challenge, which recognises designers who are pioneering innovative and scalable circular solutions in the textiles space; the development of a roadmap for a sustainable textile cluster; and curriculum development on sustainable fashion at leading fashion institutes of India.

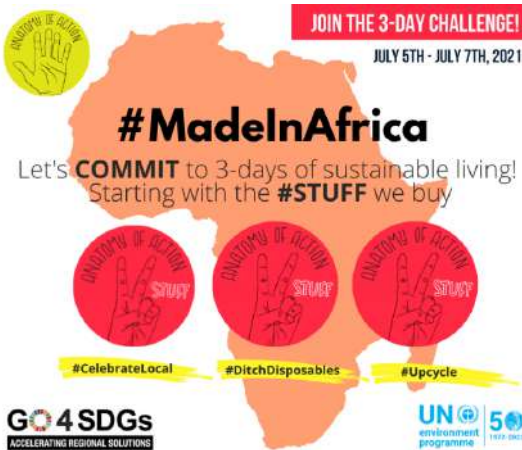


## Anatomy of Action – Fashion Slowdown:

Aims to drive individual-level behavioural change in five lifestyle domains (Food, Stuff, Move, Money, Fun) and maps key evidence-based actions (15 ways over 15 days) any individual can take to support the growing shift toward sustainability and responsible consumption and production (SDG 12).

Within the Stuff domain, the 'Fashion slowdown' ask provides advice on how to adopt more sustainable attitudes and purchasing patterns within textiles and fashion, specifically, the #FashionSlowdown ask details the positive impact of buying fewer and better clothes, staying away from fast fashion that mass produces at the cost of environmental and human justice.

The Anatomy of Action ran a 3-day #MadeInAfrica challenge devoted to the Stuff domain in Africa, with messages tailored to reflect local realities and aiming to redesign aspirations around clothes, textiles, and single use items on the continent.



## Find out more and get in touch!

For those interested in the latest news and events on sustainable fashion and textiles, sign up to our newsletter [here](#)! All are encouraged to share updates with us on your activities in this space, and to reach out to explore collaboration opportunities with UNEP or other industry experts from our network.

[www.unep.org/explore-topics/resource-efficiency/what-we-do/sustainable-and-circular-fashion](http://www.unep.org/explore-topics/resource-efficiency/what-we-do/sustainable-and-circular-fashion)

[www.oneplanetnetwork.org/value-chains/textiles](http://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/value-chains/textiles)