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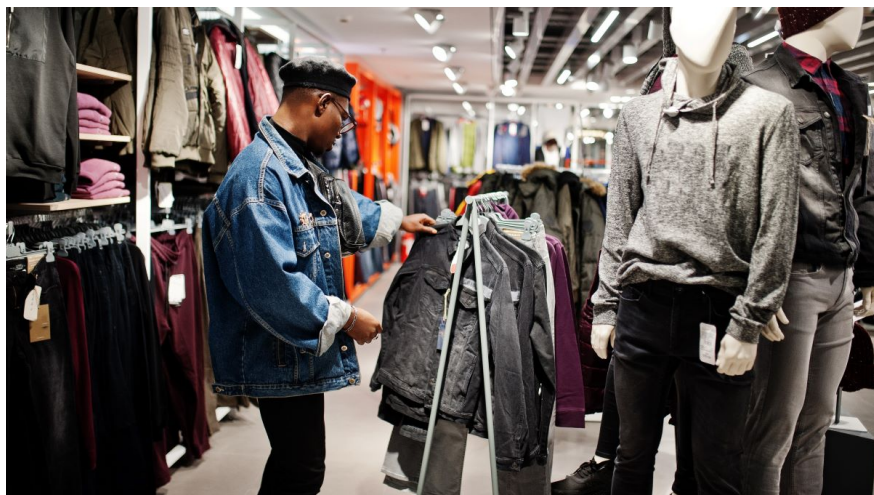
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## A Stylish Investment: Making Fashion Sustainable



By [Gemma Alexander](#)

© APR 8, 2022   [Earth Day](#), [Fashion](#), [garment industry](#)



The fashion industry is renowned for its wastefulness and steep environmental impact, but EarthDay.org's new campaign, [Fashion for the Earth](#), aims to change that. To successfully realign the fashion industry to sustainability, businesses and governments must work together. But consumers also play a role, because even if you have no interest in fashion, you purchase and wear clothing.

### Invest in the Planet

Sustainability requires more than just recycling and turning down the thermostat. It will take a global, systemic transition

#### What Do You Think?



**Do you know the most commonly recycled plastics? Which of the following plastic types are accepted in most curbside bins?**

- Plastic #1 and #2
- Plastic #4 and #5
- Plastic #7
- Plastic #2 and #6

NEXT

involving everyone to achieve a green economy. Although we have the historical model of the industrial revolution as an example of such a massive shift, it's still hard to imagine how to get from the short-term gains that drive the Fortune 500 today to a circular global economy that invests in the planet to protect human and habitat health.

Kathleen Rogers, president and CEO of EarthDay.org, says, "It's really about investment in technology. It's about the essential threesome of individuals, businesses, and governments," working together to make the change. "There are opportunities to build green economies in every industry."

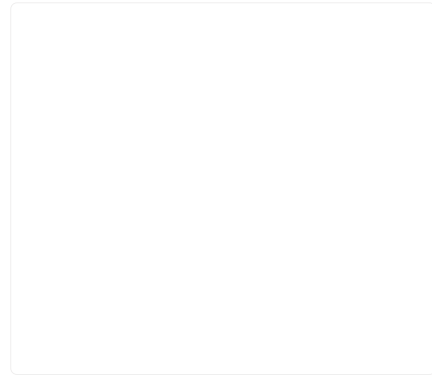
This year, EarthDay.org is launching a [new campaign](#) to make the fashion industry an example of how individuals, businesses, and government can work together to shift to a green economy. While many businesses – like mining and producing electricity – are mostly opaque and inaccessible to anyone outside the industry, fashion is a customer-facing business. Consumers have [some influence](#) with companies they buy from, and since everyone wears clothes, everyone has at least some idea of the environmental issues that the fashion industry faces (even if they don't know or care about fashion trends).

"We're focused on fashion. This is [part of plastics](#) too because there's so much in our of it in our clothes. But also, there's the incredible impact of fast fashion. So one of our big campaigns is on fast fashion because the vast majority of the 100 billion-plus pieces of clothing we make every year end up in our landfills. It causes six to eight or maybe even more percent of climate change emissions. That's not including the incredible problem we have with all of our clothes being largely made from oil," says Rogers.

## Unsustainable Fashion

Whether it's the cheap, disposable clothes of fast fashion or higher-end clothes, the fashion industry has much room for improvement. Fast fashion is famously wasteful, but every aspect of making, selling, and replacing clothing has a big environmental impact. The fashion industry is responsible for [more than 8% of total greenhouse gas emissions](#) . Every year, [40 million tons](#) of textiles are disposed of – many of them never worn. It takes [nearly 3,000 liters of water to make one cotton T-shirt](#) and [3,781 liters of water to make a pair of jeans](#) , and cotton is among the better environmental fabric choices. [More than half](#) of our clothes are made of synthetic fibers derived from oil that [contribute to 35% of all ocean microplastic pollution](#) . After technology manufacturing, the garment industry is the next leading [cause of modern slavery](#) . and child labor.

[Westlake Home - Luxury Organic Bedding](#)





More than half of our clothes contain synthetic fibers, a major source of ocean microplastic pollution.

## A Stylish Investment

Sustainable fashion refers to a clothing supply chain that is ecologically and socially responsible. EarthDay.org's [Fashion for the Earth ambassadors](#) are setting sustainable examples for the industry. Kerry Bannigan, executive director of the Fashion Impact Fund, spearheads high-level sustainability and equity programs. Maxine Bédard, author of "[Unraveled: The Life and Death of a Garment](#)," founded the New Standard Institute to drive industry accountability with data.

In addition, a lot of [fashion brands](#) are already finding ways to operate more sustainably. They are eliminating waste by using remnant fabrics and making clothes to order instead of creating overstock. They are working ethically with artisans in developing countries and improving transparency in their practices and supply chains.

Governments can hold the fashion industry responsible for cutting carbon emissions per the Paris agreement. They can do this by requiring labels that abide by the Fair Trade Commission's Green Guidelines; mandating washing machine filters that capture plastic microfibers; and eliminating unfair labor practices in the garment industry.

## How You Can Help

Individuals can participate in EarthDay.org's sustainable fashion campaign in many ways. Encourage the government to take action by signing EarthDay.org's [petition on fashion](#) to the Biden administration. And take the "[My Planet, My Closet](#)" challenge and send a video about your sustainable clothing to EarthDay.org. They'll showcase it on social media to help inspire

others.

**MY PLANET MY CLOSET**  
**LOVERS OF THE PLANET & LOVERS OF FASHION UNITE!**

**Become an 'Influencer' – Not a 'Follower'**  
 We want to showcase your efforts to halt the unsustainable consumption of clothing that is destroying the earth's water, air, soil, and species!

**JOIN EARTHDAY.ORG'S CAMPAIGN  
 FASHION FOR THE EARTH & our latest project:  
 MY PLANET MY CLOSET**

**Show off your sustainable closet in a 1-2 minute video**

- Show us your sustainable fashion haul: Model or display your clothes – this can be many items, a few items, or even just one
- Tell us about the items: Are they made of a sustainable fabric? Where did you get them? Are they second hand from a swap, a shop, a rental, a resale or a hand-me-down?
- Tell us about yourself: Describe how you feel about fashion and the planet or what you're doing to make a difference in how you shop for clothes.
- Mention that your video is for **EARTHDAY.ORG** and **My Planet My Closet**.
- Follow our few simple instructions to the right. Then send us your video!

\*organic cotton, hemp, jute, lyocell, flax, recycled polyester, fabrics made from agricultural products, etc.

**Instructions for video format and how to submit it:**

- Videos should be shot in a landscape/horizontal format and shooting with a mobile phone is fine.
- Narrators should be on-camera or (if necessary) recorded in a voice-over.
- Narrators should model or display clothing so they are clearly visible.
- Save your 1-2 minute video as an MP4 and send via Dropbox or WeTransfer to arts@earthday.org.
- At the start, please state your name and location.
- Please send videos by no later than mid-March for possible inclusion in Earth Day 2022.
- By sending your video, you agree that EARTHDAY.ORG has permission to share it on our website, social media, and on Earth Day 2022. For questions, contact arts@earthday.org.

Source: [EarthDay.org](https://earthday.org)

In addition, you can make your own [sustainable wardrobe](#) by learning how to [shop sustainably](#) and [care for your clothes](#) so they last longer. Building a [capsule wardrobe](#) by buying [secondhand](#), and supporting sustainable fashion brands from [underwear](#) to [outerwear](#), will help you [quit fast fashion](#) for good. Learn about the impacts of different [natural fibers](#) and [synthetic fabrics](#).

And when, despite [sustainable laundry](#) practices and [green dry cleaning](#), your clothes can no longer be mended or worn, find a [retailer that will recycle](#) them and reduce [your textile waste](#).

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