



# REINVENTING COPENHAGEN FASHION WEEK

*Reducing negative impacts, innovating our  
business model and accelerating industry change*

COPENHAGEN FASHION WEEK  
SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN 2020-2022





# **COPENHAGEN FASHION WEEK SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN 2020-2022**





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In early 2019, Copenhagen Fashion Week announced its ambition to transition and develop into a pioneering, sustainable event and industry platform with the capacity to further the industry's sustainability potential. A strategic process was then initiated in cooperation with our knowledge partner, In futurum, and Copenhagen Fashion Week's Sustainability Advisory Board, establishing the strategic foundation for the work going forward. Eager to get started, low-hanging fruit, like placing a ban on single-use plastic bottles and offsetting the carbon emissions of Copenhagen Fashion Week's own operations, was simultaneously identified and dealt with.

Now, after one full year of strategic development, Copenhagen Fashion Week unveils its Sustainability Action Plan 2020-2022, which is designed not only to guide its work in the years to come but, more importantly, to help push the industry to accelerate necessary and comprehensive sustainability efforts.

The three-year action plan is divided into two parts: Part 1 unfolds how the event will transition to becoming more sustainable, while Part 2 focuses on the bigger picture by describing how Copenhagen Fashion Week will use its powerful platform to push sustainability in the industry overall.

**PART 1 – THE EVENT** describes our targets in terms of reducing climate impact, resource consumption and waste creation. In the next three years Copenhagen Fashion Week aims to actively reduce its carbon footprint by 50% while continuing to offset unavoidable carbon emissions of fashion week operations, shows and presentations on the official schedule. Other aspects include exploring alternatives to disseminate shows to a wider audience using digital solutions to minimise travel.

Considering the amount of resources that go into producing a fashion week, Copenhagen Fashion Week aspires to become zero waste by setting targets, such as bans on single-use items and by having a strong commitment to full reuse and recycling. We have also set goals to innovate the event through

partnerships and governance, for example by developing a code of conduct for suppliers and partners and by pursuing partnerships with trade fairs, other fashion weeks and other organisations globally. Collaboration is a vital part of this transition towards a more sustainable fashion week and the industry overall.

**PART 2 – THE INDUSTRY**, acknowledging Copenhagen Fashion Week's potential to drive change beyond its own activities, presents the ambition to accelerate sustainable development in the industry. As a biannual event Copenhagen Fashion Week is not in a position to directly influence the everyday operations of brands. However, as fashion weeks represent a cultural and commercial gathering point for businesses and industry players, the potential to accelerate the industry's transition to responsible and innovative business practices through this very channel is considerable.

As a result, Copenhagen Fashion Week is launching the 2023 Sustainability Requirements, which will come into effect as of January 2023. The requirements stipulate that brands must achieve a certain score to be eligible to apply for a show or presentation on the official schedule of Copenhagen Fashion Week. Brands can earn points based on six strongly inter-linked focus areas covering the entire value chain, including: strategic direction, design practices, smart material choices, working conditions, consumer engagement and show production. A pilot test will be carried out in 2020 to collect data on the current baseline for show brands and to determine the required overall score for 2023.

Furthermore, all shows and presentations on the official schedule of Copenhagen Fashion Week must comply fully with 17 minimum standards or they will not be considered for participation, regardless of how high their overall score is. Some examples of standards are pledging not to destroy unsold clothes, using at least 50% certified, organic, upcycled or recycled textiles in all collections, using only sustainable packaging and zero-waste set designs for shows.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Thank you to everyone above and to Copenhagen Fashion Week's board of directors for contributing time and expertise to the development of the Sustainability Action Plan 2020-2022 and the 2023 Sustainability Requirements.





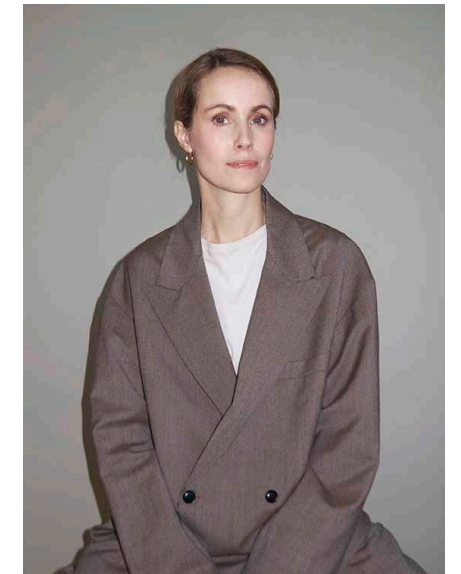


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# WORDS BY CECILIE THORSMARK

*CEO, Copenhagen Fashion Week*



The fashion industry stresses our planet and livelihoods. With the depletion of natural resources, extensive use of water, energy and chemicals and waste generation, we have reached a stage where transformation is urgently needed. The timeframe for averting the devastating effects of climate change has dwindled to a decade, and its catastrophic impacts are already visible today. Put simply, the status quo must change.

All industry players – including fashion weeks – must be accountable for their actions and willing to change the way business is done. Fashion weeks are a symbolic, cultural focal point of the fashion world, a platform where new visions, trends and talents emerge. I therefore believe they hold tremendous potential to drive change and, if we dare to be bold, we can change how business is done. We can move from being a source of inspiration and a conversation starter to a facilitator of action.

Copenhagen Fashion Week, as both a cultural institution and an industry event of considerable size and impact, is obligated to use its voice to support radical transformation and visionary minds that propel the industry's sustainability agenda. This includes establishing our fashion week as a meaningful platform for accelerating sustainability-driven businesses.

For these reasons we would like to present our Sustainability Action Plan 2020-2022, which will not only guide our work in the years to come but also push the industry to actively address substantial

challenges. Our aim is to *reduce* our event's impact, *innovate* our business model and, ultimately, *accelerate* a responsible transition in the industry. This means that by January 2023 all brands must meet specific sustainability criteria to participate in the official show schedule. Read all about the new stipulations under 2023 Sustainability Requirements in the last section of the action plan.

This action plan reflects my conviction that highly ambitious goals are required to fully leverage Copenhagen Fashion Week's influence and impact on the industry. The urgency of the situation we find ourselves in today pushes me to believe that we can no longer simply hope that progress will occur of its own accord.

Having embarked on this journey, we will transparently report on our progress and milestones in an annual Sustainability Report, revising the present action plan as needed to continue advancing the sustainability agenda of the industry and our platform.

By doing so, we wish to inspire and openly invite brands, trade fairs, fashion weeks and other stakeholders to engage in close dialogue and brave joint efforts.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Cecilie Thorsmark'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Cecilie Thorsmark  
CEO, Copenhagen Fashion Week





# INTRODUCTION

## OUR VISION

Copenhagen Fashion Week's vision is to be an agenda-setting platform that uses its voice to accelerate sustainable development in the fashion industry. This is at the core of our operations and has laid the foundation for our Sustainability Action Plan 2020-2022.

## BACKGROUND

As one of the largest consumer industries worldwide, the fashion industry is expected to grow by 81% by 2030 to meet the demands of a growing population and rising middle classes.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, we are exceeding planetary boundaries, the remaining time-frame for averting the devastating effects of climate change on the planet and people is only a decade. These, and other pressures such as waste creation and resource extraction, call all industry players to be accountable for their actions and to change the way business is done.

## CURRENT STANDING

In early 2019, to harness our capacity to propel change in the industry, Copenhagen Fashion Week embarked on the sustainable transition of our event and platform. As a first step, we established an advisory board comprising changemakers from Denmark and abroad. In cooperation with our knowledge partner In futurum, we also laid out the strategic foundation for our work going forward. In addition, we began working on our Sustainability Action Plan 2020-2022, not only to set our targets for the next three years but also to share them with the world. The next step will be to develop a new three-year action plan for 2023-2025 to launch new objectives.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 12, 13 and 17 serve as the overall framework

for our work, which is why each part of this plan will refer to relevant SDGs. The SDGs reflect international standards and agreements on human rights, the environment, climate and sustainable development, and we are committed to promoting these in the fashion industry through our Sustainability Action Plan.

## LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Copenhagen Fashion Week approaches sustainability holistically by focusing on environmental and social challenges such as waste reduction and diversity and by acknowledging cultural and behavioural aspects that are crucial to reinventing and innovating business models in the long run. That's why Copenhagen Fashion Week aspires to host a responsible, inspirational event that motivates fashion brands, our extended network and other industry players to pave the way towards responsible business practices in the fashion industry that go beyond the current notion of constant growth and ever-increasing production.

## REDUCE, INNOVATE, ACCELERATE

To deliver on this position, three pillars guide our work and inform our long-term goals and concrete actions: reduce, innovate and accelerate. These pillars push us to reinvent the powerful, cultural role of fashion weeks and to contribute more positively to the planet and its inhabitants. They showcase how our platform can be used to drive change in and outside our organisation, including, for example, show brands, partners and global organisations. Within this framework we identified areas that we believe will allow Copenhagen Fashion Week to have the highest impact in terms of event production, partnerships and governance.



# STRUCTURE

The Sustainability Action Plan 2020–2022 is divided into two parts.

**PART 1 – THE EVENT**

In our view a fashion week with profound sustainability objectives should put effort into improving event production while simultaneously striving to push the industry towards responsible business practices. In relation to event production, the present action plan sets goals to minimise Copenhagen Fashion Week’s climate impact, resource consumption and waste creation over the next three years. We have also set goals to innovate the event through partnerships and governance.

**PART 2 – THE INDUSTRY**

Acknowledging our potential to support change beyond the event itself, we are putting significant effort into accelerating sustainable development in the industry. As a result, from January 2023 Copenhagen Fashion Week will implement Sustainability Requirements for brands to be eligible to have a show or presentation. The requirements, which cover six strongly interlinked key focus areas, require brands to redefine business practices that play a vital role in current market mechanisms. Based on a full value-chain perspective the focus areas ask brands to address their strategic direction and design practices and make smart material choices, in addition to working conditions, consumer engagement and show production. Brands are expected to not only obtain a minimum score covering the focus areas, but also to meet 17 minimum standards to participate in Copenhagen Fashion Week (see: 2023 Sustainability Requirements). Our Sustainability Action Plan 2020–2022 describes how the requirements will be rolled out. As a substantial part of Copenhagen Fashion Week’s strategy, the new requirements allow us to strongly engage with the industry and to pull levers that have the greatest impact.

**PART 1 – *THE EVENT***  
**REDUCE AND INNOVATE**

- Reducing climate impact
- Reducing resource consumption and waste creation
- Innovating through partnerships and governance

**PART 2 – *THE INDUSTRY***  
**ACCELERATE**

- Accelerating the transition to sustainable business practices

**2023 SUSTAINABILITY REQUIREMENTS**

Driving and supporting brands in achieving the sustainability requirements effective as of January 2023







PART 1

***THE EVENT***

**REDUCE AND INNOVATE**



# REDUCING CLIMATE IMPACT

The fashion industry accounts for up to 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions,<sup>2</sup> which is more than the emissions of all international flights and maritime transport combined.<sup>3</sup> Urgent and immediate action must be taken within the next decade to avert the effects of the climate crisis.

OUR AMBITION

In the next three years we will continue to carbon offset our fashion week operations<sup>4</sup> while taking action to actively reduce our carbon footprint by 50%. We aim to take meaningful action on the climate emergency by raising awareness and extending our reach to brands, partners and other stakeholders, such as other fashion weeks, globally.

CURRENT STANDING

In August 2019 we offset carbon emissions from our own operations (not including third-party activities such as shows or trade fairs).

As a result the carbon emissions from our international guests’ flights and hotel accommodation, our official opening dinner, outdoor marketing, press busses (also food and beverages on the busses), staff uniforms and logo stickers for our car fleet were measured and equalled 45 tonnes. They were then offset, which is something we will continue to do. By compensating our emissions through RenSti we support two Verified Carbon Standard and Climate Community and Biodiversity Alliance Gold Level projects - planting trees (TIST) and forest conservation (Kariba).

We also switched to a climate-neutral website and only use electric cars during Copenhagen Fashion Week. We will continue to identify new solutions and opportunities to reduce our carbon footprint, all while being transparent about using offsets to balance unavoidable carbon emissions.

INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT AND THE 2023 SUSTAINABILITY REQUIREMENTS

The 2023 Sustainability Requirements, listed in the last section of the action plan, address sustainability holistically and require brands to achieve a minimum score and comply with minimum standards to be eligible to show during Copenhagen Fashion Week. In terms of **reducing climate impact** our 2023 Sustainability Requirements encourage brands to strategically focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and to implement goals on reducing negative environmental impacts along their value chains, e.g. by tracing suppliers and manufacturers, setting science-based targets, using renewable energy sources, optimising transportation or by sourcing raw materials from regenerative agriculture and by ensuring deforestation-free supply chains. The requirements also strongly emphasise smart material choices and innovative business models, such as resell/rental/leasing/sharing services.

## FUTURE ACTIONS

	2020	2021	2022
Continue to offset the carbon emissions from our own operations for every edition of fashion week	●	●	●
Measure the carbon emissions of a representative sampling of shows to determine a baseline for average show emissions	●		
Offset the carbon emissions of all shows and presentations through higher fees or require documentation for compensation	●	●	●
Reduce our own carbon emissions by 20% by replacing existing services and features with climate-friendly alternatives; baseline of 45 tonnes CO2 (measured at the August 2019 edition of fashion week)	●		
Develop code of conduct for suppliers, sponsors and partners, including promotion of carbon footprint reduction	●		
Explore digital solutions to disseminate shows to a wider audience to minimise carbon emissions from travel	●		
Identify event venues that comply with green energy standards		●	
Engage in local community building and awareness raising by promoting or offering venues that comply with green energy and building standards		●	●
Reduce our carbon emissions by 35% based on the August 2019 baseline by replacing existing services and features with climate-friendly alternatives		●	
Reduce our carbon emissions by 50% based on the August 2019 baseline by replacing existing services and features with climate-friendly alternatives			●
Create a new baseline for reduction of carbon emissions in 2023-2025			●

“Reducing climate impact” addresses SDG 13: Climate action.



# REDUCING RESOURCE CONSUMPTION AND WASTE CREATION

As one of the largest consumer industries worldwide, the fashion industry contributes to exceeding planetary boundaries through, to name a few, the inordinate use of water, energy, raw materials and chemicals, as well as overproduction and waste creation. Fashion weeks, which have a history of considerable resource use, are no exception.

OUR AMBITION

Copenhagen Fashion Week will work to reduce, reuse and recycle to minimise our resource consumption and waste creation, with the ultimate goal of becoming a zero-waste fashion week by 2022.

CURRENT STANDING

Starting with a focus on single-use plastic, Copenhagen Fashion Week banned single-use plastic bottles effective as of the August 2019 edition, a step that all scheduled shows and presentations respected. Copenhagen Fashion Week also published the 15-step *Guide to a More Responsible Show*, encouraging brands to, for example utilise only reusable or compostable cutlery, tableware and straws, to reduce food waste and to set up collection and recycling bins to facilitate waste collection after the show. Finally, Copenhagen Fashion Week avoided single-use plastic packaging for food and snacks for guests on press busses and for the international press delegation, an approach we will continue to pursue.

INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT AND 2023 SUSTAINABILITY REQUIREMENTS

The 2023 Sustainability Requirements, listed in the last section of the action plan, address sustainability holistically and require brands to achieve a minimum score and comply with minimum standards to be eligible to show during Copenhagen Fashion Week. To engage the industry in **reducing resource consumption and waste creation** the requirements encourage brands to do so within various key focus areas. Most importantly, brands are encouraged to explore innovative business models and to embed circular thinking in their practices to tackle resource use throughout the value chain. In addition, they shed light on issues such as overproduction, overstock, design enhancement and material durability.

FUTURE ACTIONS

	2020	2021	2022
Continually update the <i>Guide to a More Responsible Show</i> to reflect newly gained knowledge and insights	●	●	●
Pursue partnerships for sustainable service (cutlery, tableware and straws) for all shows and presentations	●		
Pursue partnerships for collection of show waste for all shows and presentations	●		
Develop code of conduct for suppliers, sponsors and partners moving forward, including promotion of reducing resource consumption and waste creation	●		
Ban single-use plastic hangers, garment bags and other types of single-use plastic clothing protectors and materials backstage at show and presentation venues		●	
Provide guidance for show brands to support them in executing zero-waste shows, e.g. through seminars, toolkits and/or a list of recommended suppliers		●	
Ban single-use materials in any part of the show and event production, unless documentation shows they will later be repurposed/reused			●
Achieve zero waste for Copenhagen Fashion Week’s own activities			●

“Reducing climate impact” addresses SDG 13: Climate action.



# INNOVATING THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS AND GOVERNANCE

Deeply rooted challenges faced by the fashion industry cannot be tackled by individual industry players alone but require collaborative efforts and joint innovation. A wider ecosystem of brands, policymakers, investors and legislation, to name a few, is called upon to set new benchmarks and raise sustainable practices globally. At Copenhagen Fashion Week, we thrive in an open, giving environment, where partners and broader stakeholders are invited to transparently share their learnings and methods.

**OUR AMBITION**

Copenhagen Fashion Week will take advantage of partnerships to enhance our approach and extend our reach and impact

globally. We will continually communicate our sustainability goals, strategy and progress, and improve our corporate governance to ensure the implementation of best practices.

**CURRENT STANDING**

Whenever possible we select responsible suppliers and partners who pioneer sustainable products or who have established ambitious sustainability strategies. Our main focus areas are currently food, snack and beverage suppliers for press busses and other vehicles, merchandise partners and Skt. Petri Hotel, our ISO 14001 certified hotel partner.

**INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT AND 2023 SUSTAINABILITY REQUIREMENTS**

The 2023 Sustainability Requirements, listed in the last section of the action plan, address sustainability holistically and require brands to achieve a minimum score and comply with minimum standards to be eligible to show during Copenhagen Fashion Week. In terms of **innovating through partnerships and governance**, they call upon fashion brands to actively engage with existing industry standards and certifications, the UN SDGs, industry experts, suppliers, consumers and other relevant stakeholders to align efforts and actively communicate transparently about sustainability-oriented endeavours.

## FUTURE ACTIONS

	2020	2021	2022
Continue to work with suppliers and partners who integrate sustainability at the core of their business	●	●	●
Develop a code of conduct for suppliers, sponsors and partners	●		
Pursue partnerships with trade fairs with the aim to achieve aligned climate and waste objectives	●		
Pursue partnerships with other fashion weeks and organisations to further accelerate the sustainable development of fashion weeks globally	●		
Develop and publish an annual sustainability report	●	●	●
Pursue partnerships with sustainable event venues		●	
Set new internal and external goals for our sustainability work moving forward			●
Launch three-year action plan for 2023-2025			●

“Reducing climate impact” addresses SDG 13: Climate action.





PART 2  
*THE INDUSTRY*  
ACCELERATE



# ACCELERATING THE TRANSITION TO SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PRACTICES

Even though many brands are either strongly engaged or have started working with existing initiatives that encourage the sustainable development of the industry in numerous ways, the industry is not moving at a pace that will allow it to avert its negative impacts. We recognise our role and position in the industry and take on the responsibility to accelerate and push forward necessary environmental, social and cultural changes.

**OUR AMBITION**

As a biannual event we are unable to directly influence the everyday operations of brands, but we are highly convinced that Copenhagen Fashion Week holds the potential to accelerate the industry’s transition to responsible and innovative business practices. Hence, as of January 2023, the sustainability requirements stipulate that fashion brands must achieve a certain score to participate with a show or presentation on the official schedule of Copenhagen Fashion Week. A pilot test will be carried out in 2020 to collect data on the

current baseline for show brands and to determine the required score. Furthermore, brands who wish to showcase at Copenhagen Fashion Week must also comply with minimum standards in each focus area to be considered, regardless of how high their overall score is. Please see 2023 Sustainability Requirements for additional details.

Implementation of the sustainability requirements will be supported by knowledge sharing activities, collaboration, networking, events, seminars and public communication, as outlined below, some of which will exclusively target industry players and experts.

**CURRENT STANDING**

Copenhagen Fashion Week currently requires brands to describe their sustainability actions, projects and other initiatives when applying to participate. Besides heavily spotlighting sustainable brands in our show schedule, Copenhagen Fashion Week always awards the opening show to a frontrunning sustainability-driven brand.

**FUTURE ACTIONS**

	2020	2021	2022
Include sustainability descriptions on our website in brand biographies based on self-reporting, to create transparency	●	●	●
Develop point system for the 2023 Sustainability Requirements	●		
Develop the technical implementation of the 2023 Sustainability Requirements in an online application	●		
Carry out pilot test of 2023 Sustainability Requirements online application with all show applicants for the fashion week in January 2021	●		
Assess the 2023 Sustainability Requirements with show brands to create a baseline and gather feedback	●		
Establish a sustainability committee to screen admission applications	●		
Facilitate biannual seminars in collaboration with experts and knowledge partners on the requirement focus areas	●	●	●
Host networking sessions for fashion brands in collaboration with relevant experts and knowledge partners to discuss challenges and share knowledge and ideas		●	●
Only accept applicants for fashion week in January 2023 who obtain the required score and comply with the minimum standards in each focus area			●

“Reducing climate impact” addresses SDG 13: Climate action.





# 2023 SUSTAINABILITY REQUIREMENTS

- EFFECTIVE AS OF JANUARY 2023



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## INTRODUCTION – WHY REQUIREMENTS

Dedicated to becoming a sustainable event and industry platform, Copenhagen Fashion Week presents the 2023 Sustainability Requirements that will play a crucial role in this transition. The requirements, effective as of January 2023, are designed to accelerate the sustainability efforts of brands. As a biannual event we are unable to directly influence the everyday operations of brands, but we are convinced that the requirements will be fundamental in pushing the industry towards more responsible and innovative business practices, even beyond their shows or presentations, by creating guidelines, supporting innovation and showing good practices.

In recognition of already existing guidelines, tools, codes of conduct, standards, certifications and/or agendas, many of which have been taken into account in developing the Copenhagen Fashion Week 2023 Sustainability Requirements, we strove to achieve alignment with them and a shared focus. Brands who follow and support existing agendas should therefore be able to

comply with our requirements. They are not an additional reporting system but have been developed as an essential part of the application process for brands wishing to showcase their collections at Copenhagen Fashion Week.

Copenhagen Fashion Week strongly believes that only a united industry can succeed on the journey toward sustainability. It is also our belief that continued use of the fashion week platform will create more change than abandoning it would. As part of the fashion system we will use our platform to support and empower brands to meet our sustainability requirements through various knowledge sharing activities and by facilitating networks. In other words the requirements are designed to motivate brands to become leading in the field of sustainability and to act as inspirational voices. We would like to emphasise that brands that are already able to live up to them at this stage are advanced in their sustainability efforts.



# THE SUSTAINABILITY REQUIREMENTS

The 2023 Sustainability Requirements stipulate that fashion brands must achieve a certain score to participate with a show or presentation in the official schedule of Copenhagen Fashion Week. The points can be obtained in six strongly interlinked focus areas covering the value chain: strategic direction, design, smart material choices, working conditions, consumer engagement and shows.

A pilot test will be carried out in 2020 to collect data on the current baseline of show brands and to determine the required overall score.

The sustainability requirements will be scored individually and weighted based on level of innovation, ambition and transformational potential. They will also consider existing certifications, standards and/or agendas.

Furthermore, brands must also comply with 17 minimum standards within all focus areas. These standards will be assessed independent of their overall score and include pledging not to destroy unsold clothes, using certified, organic, upcycled or recycled textiles in at least 50% of all collections, using sustainable packaging and zero waste set designs for Copenhagen Fashion Week shows.

# 2023 SUSTAINABILITY REQUIREMENTS

## MINIMUM SCORE

To be eligible to apply for a show or presentation at Copenhagen Fashion Week brands must achieve a certain score\* on their application form in terms of six focus areas. Each area and associated individual efforts will be weighted according to importance and impact:

- 1. STRATEGIC DIRECTION
- 2. DESIGN
- 3. SMART MATERIAL CHOICES
- 4. WORKING CONDITIONS
- 5. CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT
- 6. SHOWS

*\* A pilot test of the application system, to be carried out in 2020, will allow Copenhagen Fashion Week to determine a baseline and set the minimum score for eligibility in 2023.*

## 17 MINIMUM STANDARDS

To be eligible to apply for a show or presentation at Copenhagen Fashion Week, brands must comply with the minimum standards outlined below or they will not be considered for participation regardless of how high their overall score is. Consequently, brands must be able to confirm the following statements, supported by documentation, for each of the six focus areas.

- 1. STRATEGIC DIRECTION**
  - We work strategically with embedding sustainability and international standards on human rights, environment and climate
  - We include diversity and equality in our management approach and actively consider these aspects when hiring
  - We do not destroy unsold clothes
- 2. DESIGN**
  - We design to increase the quality and value of our products economically and materially, and inform our customers about this
  - We repurpose samples or have digitised this process
- 3. SMART MATERIAL CHOICES**
  - At least 50% of our materials are certified (e.g. GOTS, Fairtrade, cradle-to-cradle), organic, upcycled or recycled
  - We have a preferred materials list in place
  - We have a list of restricted substances in place, following the requirements of the EU REACH Directive, and engage with our suppliers to ensure compliance
- 4. WORKING CONDITIONS**
  - We are committed to sourcing responsibly, according to international standards on human and labour rights, and we work with our suppliers to ensure, e.g. freely chosen employment, secure employment, no child labour, safe and healthy working conditions
- 5. CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT**
  - Our in-store staff is well informed about our sustainability strategy
  - We educate and inform our customers about sustainable practices on multiple platforms, e.g. online and in-store
  - We do not utilise single-use plastic packaging but offer recyclable, biodegradable/compostable or repurposable alternatives
- 6. SHOWS**
  - Our set design is zero waste
  - We offset the carbon footprint of our show
  - All food and beverages are served in recycled or reusable/recyclable packaging, including cutlery, tableware and straws
  - We do not use single-use plastic hangers, garment bags or other types of single-use plastic clothing protectors and materials backstage
  - We are a signatory of the Danish Fashion Ethical Charter and consider diversity and inclusivity when casting models



# FOCUS AREAS

Together with our knowledge partner, In futurum, we defined six focus areas, based on a full value-chain perspective, to categorise the sustainability requirements into a manageable system for the admission application. The focus areas are meant to support brands in focusing

their efforts by breaking down certain sustainability related topics into digestible chunks. The six focus areas are not to be seen as stand-alone pillars in a brand’s strategy but rather as enablers that connect and create mutual synergy to achieve the greatest positive impact due to their alignment.

1 STRATEGIC DIRECTION	2 DESIGN	3 SMART MATERIAL CHOICES	4 WORKING CONDITIONS	5 CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT	6 SHOWS
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The six focus areas are based on a full value-chain perspective.

As fashion and sustainability encompass a multitude of aspects, the six focus areas touch upon economic, environmental, cultural, social and ethical issues. For this reason the sustainability requirements were developed to permit flexibility and cover the multifaceted approaches that brands use.

In the following each focus area is described in more detail and contains a list of both the

minimum requirements that must be met and the additional ways in which brands can earn points.

A pilot test of the application system, to be carried out in 2020, will allow Copenhagen Fashion Week to determine a baseline and the exact distribution of points, in addition to setting the minimum score for eligibility in 2023. The criteria will be weighed according to urgency and impact.







# 1 STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Embedding sustainability in the overall business strategy will support brands to set milestones, keep track of their progress and measure impacts. Hence, having a strategy in place will allow companies to understand the interconnectedness of all aspects that set responsible and caring business practices apart. The strategic direction is closely linked to, e.g. the target audience, markets, product offerings and price points, with no one-size-fits-all solution for sustainable business practices.

## MINIMUM STANDARDS

- We work strategically with embedding sustainability and international standards on human rights, environment and climate into our business
- We include diversity and equality in our management approach and actively consider these aspects when hiring staff, especially for management positions
- We do not destroy unsold clothes

## ADDITIONAL ACTIONS TO EARN POINTS

- We report on our sustainability goals and progress publicly and transparently
- Our business model challenges resource consumption through de-coupling, circularity or de-growth
- We have a long-term (5 to 10-year) sustainability strategy in place that guides our business practices
- We have science-based targets in place to reverse climate change
- We trace tier-one and tier-two suppliers and disclose information
- Our business model avoids end-of-season overstock
- At least xx% of our energy comes from renewable resources
- We promote and invest in land restoration to reverse climate change and protect biodiversity
- The UN Sustainable Development Goals guide our business practices
- We invest at least xx% of our revenues in new technologies, research or accelerator programmes
- Our transportation and logistics are optimised to reduce greenhouse gas emission by xx%
- We offer on-demand production to eliminate overstock
- We engage in partnerships and with experts to expand our knowledge to accelerate our impacts and find new solutions
- We engage in knowledge sharing activities with other brands or stakeholders who share our sustainability ambitions
- Circularity is embedded in our strategy
  - We offer our customers resell, rental, share and leasing services
  - We have online and/or in-store take-back schemes in place
  - We offer free repair services to our customers

xx = to be determined in 2020



## 2 DESIGN

Sustainable design aims to minimise a product’s negative environmental and social impacts throughout the value chain and can be approached from various angles, mainly based

on a product’s intended use and the brand’s business model. Decisions made in the design and development stage not only cover a product’s direct features but also consider their end of use.

### MINIMUM STANDARDS

- We design to increase the quality and value of our products economically and materially, and inform our customers about this
- We repurpose samples or have digitised this process

### ADDITIONAL ACTIONS TO EARN POINTS

- Our design approach connects the product’s intended use with appropriate material choices and end-of-use considerations
- We upcycle leftover fabrics or have a plan for leftovers and/or production scraps
- Our design approach eliminates waste in the production process
- Our design considers innovative technologies, e.g. 3D printers and lasers
- At least xx% of our collection is designed to reduce the environmental impact in the use phase
- At least xx% of our collection is designed for circularity (refurbishment, ease of cyclability, modular/ changeable components, multiple purposes/versatility, biodegradability/compostability)
- Our design approach considers body inclusivity

xx = to be determined in 2020

## 3 SMART MATERIAL CHOICES

With the planet’s resources becoming increasingly scarce and planetary boundaries being exceeded, smart material choices play an integral role in sustainable business practices. Choices related to a brand’s material consumption and production processes have the highest environmental impact in the value chain, which is why the fashion industry requires change at scale at a speed not yet seen.

### MINIMUM STANDARDS

- At least 50% of our materials are certified (e.g. GOTS, Fairtrade, cradle-to-cradle), organic, upcycled or recycled
- We have a preferred materials list in place
- We have a list of restricted substances in place, following the requirements of the EU REACH Directive, and engage with our suppliers to ensure compliance

### ADDITIONAL ACTIONS TO EARN POINTS

- We utilise an assessment tool to monitor and minimise negative impacts throughout the entire lifecycle
- We source raw materials from regenerative agriculture
- We ensure that our supply chain is deforestation-free
- Our facilities and suppliers prioritise responsible water stewardship
- We have assessed our baseline and will reduce water and energy usage by at least xx%
- We are exploring new generation sustainable materials to improve our sustainable material mix
- We eliminate coatings and finishes if the product’s intended use does not require them to perform
- We have sought expert knowledge to guide our material choices
- At least xx% of our collection is made of pre- and/or post-consumer waste
- At least xx% of our collection contains other waste materials, e.g. food
- At least xx% of our collection is made of biodegradable fibres
- At least xx% of our collection is designed with mono-fibres in mind
- At least xx% of our fabrics/materials are sourced close to our target markets

xx = to be determined in 2020



# 4 WORKING CONDITIONS

The fashion industry’s business practices put pressure on the planet, but they also have significant impact on the human rights of people working within the industry, be it in global supply chains or in stores across the world. Building upon human equality, where all people are born with fundamental freedoms and inalienable rights, we want to challenge existing social inequalities and the negative impacts of employment in the fashion industry. The sustainability

requirements in this focus area call for human interaction, a sense of community and the appreciation of human life. Copenhagen Fashion Week strongly believes that respectful, safe, secure and inspirational work environments lay the foundation for valuing employees and also function as a driver of motivation, pointing toward the link between the social and environmental potential of sustainable practices.

## MINIMUM STANDARD

– We are committed to sourcing responsibly, according to international standards on human and labour rights, and we work with our suppliers to ensure, e.g. freely chosen employment, secure employment, no child labour, safe and healthy working conditions

## ADDITIONAL ACTIONS TO EARN POINTS

- Our supplier engagement is informed by the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains in the Garment and Footwear Sector
- We exercise due diligence in our value chain, including supply chain to ensure respect for human rights, adherence to the International Labour Organization’s core conventions, combatting bribery, bribe solicitation and extortion
- We have a complaints mechanism in place to gather feedback and take action
- We actively promote gender equality and diversity among partners and suppliers
- We educate our employees on social and environmental sustainability by offering mandatory training programmes and/or educational material for all departments
- We exchange knowledge with our suppliers and invest in what we require from them
- We require full compliance from our suppliers in terms of minimum wages and collectively bargained wages
- We monitor real wage growth in supplier factories
- We monitor the frequency of work accidents
- We invest xx% of our revenues in community building and/or local craftsmanship
- xx% of our collection is sourced from countries with a rating of less than 7 on the Labour Rights Indicators ten-point scale
- At least xx% of our collection is fair trade

xx = to be determined in 2020







## 5 CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT

Critical discussions in the industry frequently revolve around the fast consumption of fashion. Clothing, footwear and accessories are piling up in landfills globally, constantly driving faster fashion cycles. Copenhagen Fashion Week is highly aware that this issue is deeply rooted in

societal, behavioural, psychological and economic values and urgently requires consumer engagement. As a result we encourage brands to use their voices to rethink current business models and to inform their customers.

### MINIMUM STANDARDS

- Our in-store staff is well informed about our sustainability strategy
- We educate and inform our customers about sustainable practices on multiple platforms, e.g. online and in-store
- We do not utilise single-use plastic packaging but offer recyclable, biodegradable/compostable or repurposable alternatives

### ADDITIONAL ACTIONS TO EARN POINTS

- We process customer feedback and loop data into our design and development process
- We repair or redesign products
- We offer sharing services to our customers
- We offer rental, leasing, resell and sharing services to our customers
- We resell used products to prolong their life
- We offer a take-back scheme to our customers
- We collaborate with other initiatives or charities to increase the amount of clothes collected
- We engage with local authorities on waste sorting
- We offer workshops or educational material to our customers on, e.g. product repair
- Our product labels include clear care instructions featuring information on washing, caring, mending, drying, repairing, recycling and disposal
- We offer our customers the opportunity to co-create products
- We actively discourage price reductions

xx = to be determined in 2020



## 6 SHOWS

Fashion fulfils numerous functions in our daily lives, ranging from protection against the elements to expressing our identities. We enjoy fashion and responsible design. The fashion week platform generally exists to support, showcase

and leverage craftsmanship, creative talents and innovation. Copenhagen Fashion Week is saying goodbye to the notion of the always new, opening up the opportunity to be a voice and a platform that challenges the status quo.

### MINIMUM STANDARDS

- Our set design is zero waste
- We offset the carbon footprint of our show
- All food and beverages are served in recycled or reusable/recyclable packaging, including cutlery, tableware and straws
- We do not use single-use plastic hangers, garment bags or other types of single-use plastic clothing protectors and materials backstage
- We are a signatory of the Danish Fashion Ethical Charter and consider diversity and inclusivity when casting models

### ADDITIONAL ACTIONS TO EARN POINTS

- We engage in schemes to offset the carbon emissions of our shows/presentations
- We only offer organic food and snacks – preferably vegetarian/vegan, local and fair trade
- We do not provide goodie bags
- We promote the value of existing collections
- Our selected venue complies with green building standards
- Our merchandise is reusable
- Sustainability is an integral part of our partners, sponsors and suppliers' businesses
- Our makeup and hair artists use organic or natural supplies
- We use digital instead of paper invitations

xx = to be determined in 2020





## A FINAL NOTE

Copenhagen Fashion Week's new 2023 Sustainability Requirements reflect our current level of knowledge and a corresponding level of ambition. Since we are aware that sustainability is an ever-evolving field with new knowledge constantly being gained and rapid

technological progress and innovation taking place, Copenhagen Fashion Week will update the requirements, if necessary, especially once the pilot test has been conducted in 2020.





**ENDNOTES**

<sup>1</sup>*Global Fashion Agenda and Boston Consulting Group (2019). Pulse of the Fashion Industry 2019.*  
<sup>2</sup>*UNFCC (2018). UN Helps Fashion Industry Shift to Low Carbon.*  
<sup>3</sup>*Ellen MacArthur Foundation (2017). A New Textiles Economy: Redesigning Fashion’s Future.*  
<sup>4</sup>*For the August 2019 edition of Copenhagen Fashion Week we offset our own operations for the first time. In 2020 we will extend this to include all shows and presentations on the official schedule.*



