

SLOW FASHION

Tailoring a Strategic Industry Approach towards **SUSTAINABILITY**

Please enjoy this Industry Report based on a Master's thesis paper for the Strategic Leadership towards Sustainability Program at the Blekinge Institute of Technology in Karlskrona, Sweden. You will find the completed report by clicking **here**.

SLOWFASHIONFORWARD

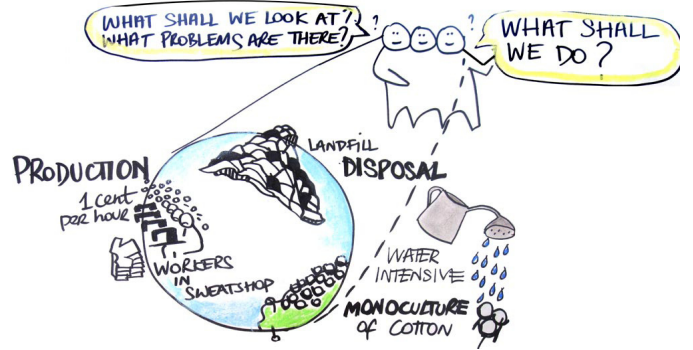
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Let us introduce ourselves

We, Carlotta Cataldi, Maureen Dickson and Crystal Grover, are a research group that recently graduated from the Master's in Strategic Leadership towards Sustainability programme at the Blekinge Institute of Technology in Karlskrona, Sweden. Although our professional backgrounds are very different, coming respectively from the worlds of fashion, sustainability and design, we naturally clustered around a common interest in fashion and a concern for today's over consumptive behaviour by both the fashion industry and consumers.



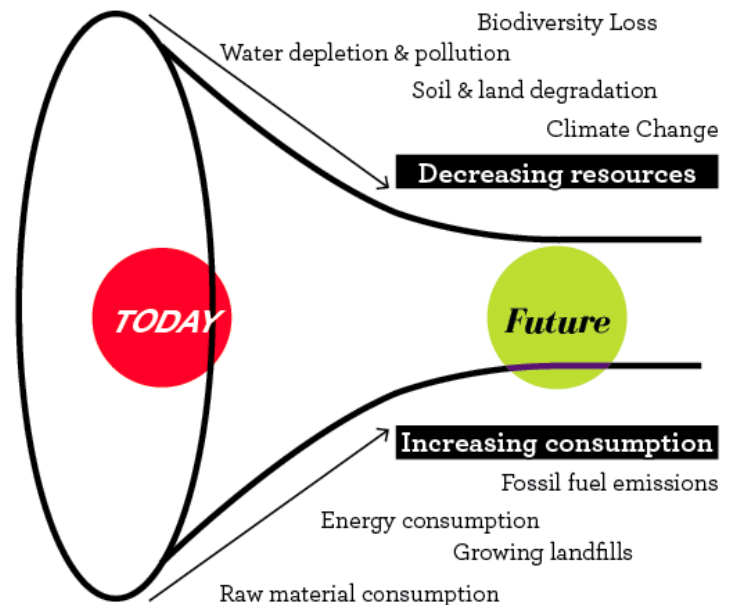
The fashion industry and today's sustainability challenge

The fashion industry is contributing to today's sustainability challenge in a number of ways. It currently uses a constant flow of natural resources to produce 'Fast Fashion' garments¹. In the way it operates, this industry is constantly contributing to the depletion of fossil fuels, used, for example, in textile & garment production and transportation (Allwood et al. 2006). Fresh water reservoirs are also being increasingly diminished for cotton crop irrigation (Draper et al. 2007). The fashion industry is also introducing in a systematic way, and in always greater amounts, manmade compounds such as pesticides and synthetic fibres, which increases their persistent presence in nature (Claudio 2007).

As a result, some natural resources are in jeopardy and forests and ecosystems are being damaged or destroyed for such things as fibre production, leading to issues such as droughts, desertification and not least, climate change, that are affecting society at large (Holmberg et al. 2000).

To visualize in a simple way the sustainability challenge of today's fashion industry, the funnel metaphor (illustrated adjacent) is used to demonstrate that if the consumption behaviour of the larger fashion industry, including consumers, keeps increasing at the current rate, the impacts on the social and ecological environment will also increase. This leads to a very limited space for the industry to handle these impacts in the future and to resolve the issues society is facing today. This is symbolized by the sloping walls of the funnel.

Using this metaphor we can draw the conclusion that if we do not want to 'hit the narrowing walls of the funnel,' we must re-design the current unsustainable practices in society, including the fashion industry. This change, if achieved, is likely to result in a gradual return to equilibrium, where societal behaviour is not in conflict with natural resources and the fashion industry can carry on without compromising the health of the people and our planet.



¹ Clothing industry focused on low cost mass-production. It is sold by retailers at very low prices and is based on the latest trends, which encourages consumers to purchase more than they need resulting in external environmental and social impacts.

What is Slow Fashion? How can it help society to become more sustainable?

The Slow movements began to emerge in the late 1980s with Slow Food, a movement born in Italy with the purpose of preserving the cultural integrity of cuisine in local regions. The term 'Slow Fashion' was coined by Kate Fletcher in 2007 (Centre for Sustainable Fashion, UK) and shares many characteristics with the Slow Food movement.

In fact, Slow Fashion:

Introduces the 'consumer' into the supply chain as 'co-producer'²;

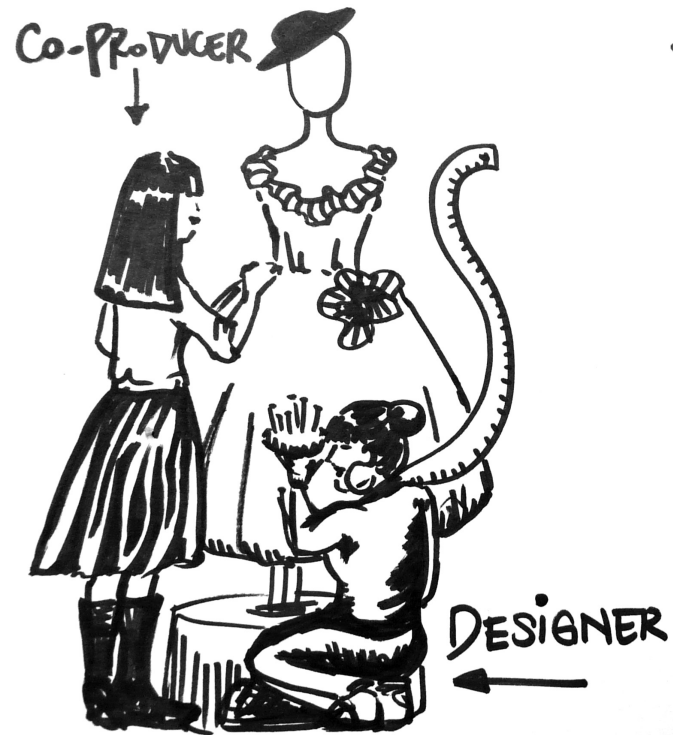
Increases the quality of life of all workers in the supply chain, guaranteeing their fundamental human rights;

Meets in a more satisfactory way the human needs of co-producers; in the case of fashion, the needs of identity, creativity and participation, encouraging co-producers to consume less and act responsibly;

Drastically reduces the amount of raw materials introduced in the supply chain, harnessing creativity to find strategic or service-based alternatives;

Sources local materials and labour;

Preserves and relearns traditional skills.



We consider the Slow Fashion movement as a viable alternative for achieving sustainability in the fashion industry. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to use a strategic approach to strengthen the Slow Fashion movement and move it towards sustainability.

² A co-producer is an end-user in the supply chain. This term will be used instead of 'consumer' in this report, as it acknowledges that the end users are involved in the production process through their purchases; by including them in the supply chain, it also includes them in sharing responsibility and gives them access to transparent information.

Systems Thinking

Systems thinking is a scientific discipline which looks at the 'whole' rather than analyzing the different parts of a system.

A system is an organized collection of parts (or subsystems) that are highly integrated to accomplish an overall goal. Examples of a system can be a city, a living body, an ecosystem, or, in this case, the fashion industry. This way of thinking can help people understand the overall structure of a system, the patterns and the cycles present in it, and it can facilitate the identification of the root causes of problems, showing the interconnectivity between events, and suggesting the most strategic ways to address problems successfully.

In our research, we look at the larger 'fashion system' from a bird's eye perspective, acknowledging that this large and complex system contains several smaller systems, such as 'Fast Fashion', 'Slow Fashion', 'haute couture' and so on. The larger 'fashion industry' itself exists within an even larger system, 'Society', that exists and depends upon another larger system, the 'Ecosphere'.

Every action carried out collectively by one system, like Fast Fashion, or another one like Slow Fashion, will have an impact on the whole.

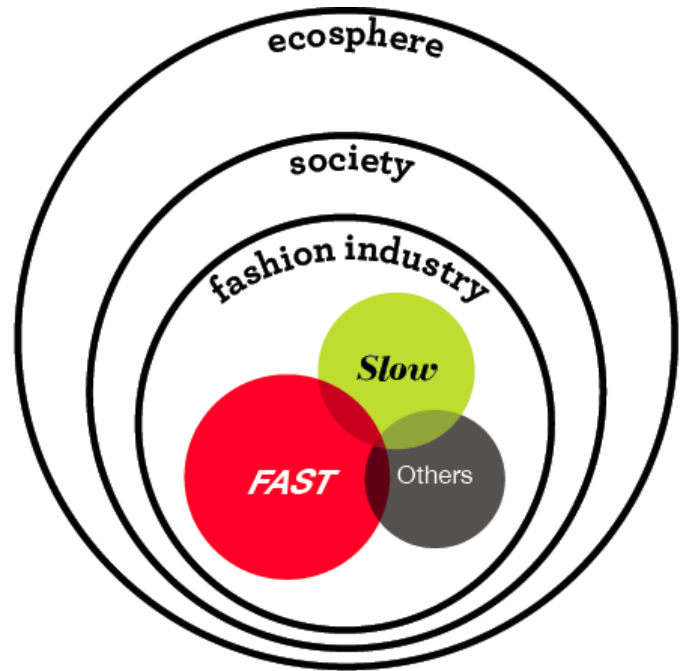
Leverage Points

Our research team has also used this concept to support the systems thinking approach in our strategic planning towards sustainability. The concept of Leverage Points was developed by scientist and system thinker Donella Meadows in 1997 to help identify points where it is possible to intervene and create change in any system.

Using this concept, we identified many leverage points in the fashion industry that, if used strategically, could work to help Slow Fashion grow stronger as a movement. At the same time, we have also identified barriers that are rooted in the larger fashion system and are difficult to remove, preventing a faster development of the Slow Fashion movement.

Each leverage point has offered us a snapshot of the industry actions which provided a good foundation to build our recommendations for the Slow Fashion movement. It is important to note that there can be many leverage points in a system, and knowing this, our research team has focused especially on the specific topics that we have found to be relevant at this current time.

This way of thinking also highlights the dependency of our Society and the Fashion Industry upon the Ecosphere (natural resources such as water, land, fossil fuels, cotton, wool, and other material fibres etc.).



Leverage Points

Places to intervene in a system
(in increasing order of effectiveness)

12. Constants, parameters & numbers
11. The size of buffers relative to flows
10. Structure of material stocks & flows
9. Lengths of delays
8. Negative feedback loops
7. Positive feedback loops
6. Flow of information
5. Rules of the system
4. Power to self-organize
3. Goals of the system
2. Paradigm the system arises from
1. Transcend paradigms

Framework for Strategic Sustainable Development

The FSSD is a strategic planning tool that can be particularly useful in any given system that aims to move towards sustainability. Its main characteristics are to give clarity and insight in situations that present complex problems.

The Framework builds on a basic understanding of what makes life possible, how our biosphere functions and how we are part of the earth's natural systems. Rather than get lost in abstract definitions and causes, it builds on a platform of basic science and is designed to allow true interdisciplinary, cross sector cooperation for concrete and measurable change towards sustainability (Waldron et al. 2008). After all, if you want to achieve 'success', you have to first understand what this means in real terms before you can then take strategic steps to achieve it.

For our research team, success corresponds to the achievement of a more sustainable society, and in this case we propose Slow Fashion as a way for the fashion industry to get there. Sustainability, which represents our vision of success for society and for fashion, has been defined in many different ways by different organizations but we choose to define it by using four Sustainability Principles developed by Dr. Karl-Henrik Robèrt, Dr. John Holmberg, Dr. Goran Broman, and peer reviewed by a network of scientists. The FSSD and the Sustainability Principles, that basically represent the conditions for a sustainable society, are promoted and supported by The Natural Step, a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to education, advisory work and research in sustainable development, founded in 1989 by Dr. Karl-Henrik Robèrt.

To move towards sustainability we should make sure that each one of our actions (both as individuals, as businesses, and as society in general) follow these simple 'rules'. Please keep these Principles in mind as they can guide all of us towards success!

BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR SUSTAINABILITY

The Slow Fashion movement will work to contribute to a sustainable society by ensuring that it will not subject nature to the systematic increase in:

SP1 Concentrations of substances extracted from the earth - These are finite and scarce materials such as fossil fuels for energy production or heavy metals for dyeing fabric. Their systematic accumulation in the ecosystem contributes to global scale issues such as climate change and air, water and soil pollution.

SP2 Concentrations of substances produced by the textile industry - These are manmade materials such as synthetic fibres (polyester, nylon etc.) or toxic chemicals used in textile processing and manufacturing which are not kept in closed cradle to cradle loops. At their end of life they do not fully decompose leading to an accumulation in the soil and landfills, leaching into waterways and compromising human, wildlife and overall ecological well-being.

SP3 Degradation of nature - Many human activities can undermine the health of the earth. They include relying on monoculture conventional cotton crops causing biodiversity loss, removing forests to harvest wool and agricultural crops for fibres, or polluting waterways with factory effluents.

And in this society...

SP4 People are not subject to conditions that systematically undermine their ability to meet their needs. There are currently many issues in the fashion industry that do not support an equal quality of life for all workers in the supply chain by failing to address fair wages and work place health and safety issues properly. Also, by neglecting the above three principles, the industry is undermining the ability of future generations to meet their own needs as they will not have enough resources to sustain themselves.

SCOPE

This research is intended to inspire a broad audience in the fashion industry but it is specifically targeting the Slow Fashion movement consisting of designers, brands, suppliers, buyers, manufacturers, retailers and co-producers.

The specific goals and expected outcomes from this research are to:

- Determine how the Slow Fashion movement can be strengthened using a Sustainable Development (SSD) approach and the Framework for Strategic Sustainable Development (FSSD);
- Identify the leverage points in the fashion industry and society as a whole that currently benefit the Slow Fashion movement;
- Determine the barriers and gaps that prevent the Slow Fashion movement from effectively utilizing the leverage points;
- Provide strategic recommendations to move the Slow Fashion movement towards sustainability and increase its presence in the fashion market and society at large.

RESULTS

Taking advantage of the FSSD as an organizing tool, and System Thinking as an overarching mental model, we have discovered that the Slow Fashion movement today is currently not very well organized as a system and it is not moving strategically towards sustainability.

One reason is that most fashion designers and other players in the Slow Fashion movement, like farmers, and co-producers themselves for instance, do not see their interconnectivity with others in the movement, because it is still considered a relatively new development and it is not widely known to the greater public.

For the purpose of this research, the Slow Fashion model encompasses a number of business models and fashion industry terms, such as “sustainable”, “ecofashion”, “ethical”, “green” fashion, “vintage” and “second-hand”, and gather these models under one unified movement.

During March-April 2010, we surveyed 46 Slow/Sustainable fashion designers, brands, buyers, and manufacturers from Canada, the United States, UK, Denmark, Sweden and other European countries (see Appendix 1 for all survey responses). The survey results show that Slow Fashion businesses do not share a common definition of sustainability and currently have no common vision for the future. But, fourteen respondents provided a definition of what sustainability means for their business and these definitions incorporated environmental and/or social goals (see text box).

Industry Sustainability Quotes

“Providing a framework and network between people in which fashion is valued and enjoyed and the stories behind the production or manufacture are shared and transparent.”

“Using eco-friendly materials, natural fibres and help the green economy”

“Trying to make the smallest impact on the environment while still running a business and making money.”

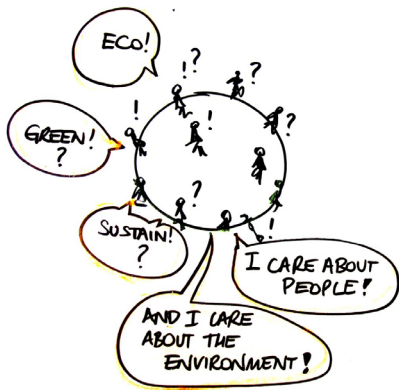
“Having garments made in a production house that pays fair wages and has flexible working hours; this creates a more quality made garment. Being environmentally conscious in all aspects of sourcing from fabrics to office supplies, etc.”

There is an array of small, disconnected actions that aim to achieve sustainability, but as the definition of sustainability is different for each person in the movement, these individual actions prove to be only lightly impacting the system.

We recognize that the Slow Fashion movement is currently not behaving strategically and it is not leveraging its full potential.

Results cont.

From the survey responses, 73 % acknowledged that they have a responsibility to practice environmental stewardship by incorporating life-cycle thinking or eco design principles when sourcing materials or designing garments. The Slow Fashion movement consists of fashion designers that rely on raw fibres, such as organic cotton and other materials that are derived from the natural environment. Specifically, 60% of respondents are sourcing sustainable materials such as organic cotton, bamboo, hemp and a variety of others. According to the survey results, 25 out of 33 respondents make material sourcing decisions based on minimizing environmental impacts. This suggests that there is a strong understanding of the connection between the designer and the impacts he or she has on the environment.



Also, the movement recognizes its connectivity to the social system, its impacts on people in the supply chain and aims to make a positive contribution by paying living wages and supporting the communities that they work with. Fifteen of the survey respondents indicated that the retail price of their garments reflects the external social costs of producing the clothing by paying producers a living wage. This ensures they are positively supporting organic farmers/mills and local production. Three of the respondents also redistribute a percentage of their profits into community development or local charities. Seven survey respondents indicated that they have future plans for supporting communities or environmental organizations.

In addition, the concept of leverage points has helped us to focus our attention on places that represent opportunities for change within the larger fashion system in order to strengthen the Slow Fashion movement (see text box).

At the higher leverage points, the Slow Fashion movement is creating buffers of more sustainable materials such as organic cotton, bamboo, hemp and flax. Also, all survey respondents were interested in sourcing more of these in the future; however they are generally more expensive. There is also a delay in increasing the supply of renewable fibres and developing natural dyes caused by lacking technologies and skills in working with these.

Localized supply chains in addition to textile up-cycling, is supporting Slow Fashion material flows. But, it is still more cost-effective to source textiles from developing countries, and creating new sustainable supply chain structures is very challenging and time consuming.

Increasing media coverage, marketing strategies and co-producer awareness campaigns could influence the shift to Slow Fashion as the flow of information (leverage point 6) can be a very effective point of intervention, especially, if new information is being delivered on sustainability and the benefits of Slow Fashion within the supply chain and to co-producers. Nonetheless, there is currently a scarcity of clear information on the sustainability impacts of the fashion supply chain, and it is currently also difficult to compare the impact of fibres and dyeing processes. The scarcity of information is particularly true when speaking about co-producers: Slow fashion designers try to give information on the different ways to make garments to their clients, but the overall public awareness of Slow Fashion is still quite low and awareness campaigns and educational programs in schools and universities are concentrated in only a few countries.

Overall, there are not enough rules, punishments and legislation to limit pollution in the fashion supply chain, and enforcement is low in some countries – resulting in lower retail prices for Fast Fashion companies. Slow fashion producers are going above and beyond environmental standards, thus their prices are not as competitive. As well, organic and Fair Trade certifications and labeling schemes are too expensive and time consuming for small fashion brands, and the awareness of these eco-labels with the general public is still quite low.

At the most influential leverage points, the Slow Fashion movement is beginning to self-organize from grassroots initiatives, and innovative, forward-thinking small brands, but it still needs strategic organization to succeed as an officially recognized movement. It relies on a diversity of materials, ideas, business models and each business surveyed had different goals and purposes; however, an overarching theme of willing to contribute to a more sustainable society emerged from the survey's results. Lastly, Slow Fashion presents an alternative paradigm to the current fashion model by establishing new mental models in society that satisfy fundamental human needs, instead of market wants, while allowing for the earth's natural regeneration to take place.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research findings, 30 short, medium and long-term recommendations have been suggested to strengthen the Slow Fashion movement and to move it towards sustainability (See Appendix 2 for the complete list). Each recommendation is targeted at a specific group of Slow Fashion players and taps into one or more leverage points. The three key recommendations are discussed below.

Co-Create Slow Fashion Values

Slow Fashion Values should be co-created from within the movement to provide inspiration and guidance for designers and others working in the movement. To become the predominant fashion model in a sustainable society, these values can be co-created to form a shared mental model that represents a future vision, collective goals and aspirations, and to provide a focal point for self-organization (leverage points 3 & 4).

These can be unique to the movement and represent a shared vision of success, by forming the basis for future sustainable actions. It will be understood that the key goal of the movement is to contribute to a more 'sustainable society', as defined by the four science-based Sustainability Principles proposed in our research. Individual designers/brands can further customize these values for their business.

We believe that the co-creation of these values can help the Slow Fashion movement to become more strategic and consistent in its development. In fact, by sharing the same values and an overall vision, all players in the movement will feel a stronger bond between each other and will increase their relationships to create a community of support and trust.

These values will then naturally reflect in the work carried out by the players in the Slow Fashion movement and will have the possibility to reach with a clear message other fashion designers and lastly the co-producer, providing inspiration for both.

We consider this recommendation to be important for the growth of Slow Fashion as it represents the condition for success in the movement. The diffusion of the values would occur through a Slow Fashion network (see below), which would allow all players to meet physically and virtually, to keep their relationships alive and their business cooperation strong.

Slow Fashion Network

This recommendation is for any player in Slow Fashion that wishes to facilitate the growth of the movement. It is based on the analysis of the opportunities raised by leverage point 4 (the power to self-organize) and leverage point 6, relative to the flow of information within the supply chain.

The focus here is on local relationships and global interconnectedness. In order to encourage the development of collaboration, and to spur the mobilization between the players of the existing Slow Fashion supply chain, we propose the creation of a unique, global organization under the name of Slow Fashion, which includes "eco", "sustainable", "green", and "ethical" fashion.

It works to build a stronger industry, facilitating collaboration, the sharing of information, transparency and improving producer relationships with regards to

Becoming recognized worldwide, the Slow Fashion movement could increase its visibility, spread the ideals of sustainable development and the values of Slow Fashion within the larger fashion industry, thus influencing society as a whole. This will trigger an increase in the demand for Slow Fashion, leading to growth of the movement. Decentralized local hubs are a key aspect to ensure future flexibility and to preserve local designs/culture and interests as the movement grows.

Start-ups and small brands will be able to benefit from the visibility that the whole organization has on a global and local level. This includes having access to educational, research & consultancy services as well as media coverage, enhancing the marketability of the whole industry.

Slow Fashion Network cont.

The idea for this organization is to act as an overarching global hub and it is encouraged to have the following functions:

- Represent the Slow Fashion movement worldwide;
- Educate and promote the Slow Fashion Values and the four science-based Sustainability Principles;
- Create and manage a global online platform gathering all local chapters in the Slow Fashion movement, encouraging collaboration and transparency;
- Offer scientific information of best and most up-to-date sustainable practices in textile and garment production, in collaboration with well-established third party entities, universities and research centres.
- Organize annual events to encourage and consolidate personal relationships between the members of the organization and the general public;
- Promote Slow Fashion and ‘reflective consumption’ by different media to reinforce visibility and values;
- Promote a Slow Fashion label (see Recommendation 3); and
- Create opportunities for members to meet locally to build relationships, initiate creative projects and increase their collaboration.

Slow Fashion Label

A garment-label unique to Slow Fashion should be developed to distinguish the movement within the larger fashion market and to add credibility to the movement. This labeling scheme would build off and incorporate current fibre and production process standards, such as organic cotton, Fair Trade and the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS). The Slow Fashion label would be certified by an independent third-party organization would be globally accessible, and easily recognized by co-producers. Moreover, it would need to be financially affordable for small brands and designers (i.e. fee structure would reflect company profits/market share). According to the survey, 98 % of respondents would support this type of initiative.

The label would increase visibility of smaller brands and designers that would be part of a network and could use shared communication/media channels, cutting down individual advertising costs. It would lead to a greater co-producer awareness of the industry and allow for a starting point to build more trusting and long-lasting relationships with co-producers. By identifying the label with a credible and globally recognized organization, co-producers will trust the label and will want to support designers and brands through their purchases or individual actions. Overall, it will help to secure profits to sustain Slow Fashion businesses over time.

SLOW FASHION VALUES

The Slow Fashion Values can be used to encourage all levels of the fashion supply chain – from individual designers, through to retailers and co-producers – to make a positive contribution to a sustainable society. We have discovered 10 Slow Fashion Values with the help of an expert panel and the supporting research from the industry survey results. Here, we looked closely at what is already currently occurring not only in the context of fashion and its move towards sustainability but also in other realms, for example food, design, agriculture etc.

These values embody the concepts of “Slow” and “Sustainability”. They are not meant to be a prescriptive solution, but they can be used to encourage creativity. They can also be further adapted and put into practice by individual businesses and designers. The values are interconnected, work in unison and are meant to inspire and inform the movement towards a common goal.

The values are also intended to spark a dialogue around sustainability issues within the larger fashion industry and with co-producers. They may also be used to establish a collective purpose for the Slow Fashion movement to satisfy human needs through fashion design, creation and use.

Why is it important to co-create the Slow Fashion Values?

The Slow Fashion Values, similarly to the principles of Slow Food, Slow Design, and Permaculture, can represent a set of shared ideals and a future vision of success amongst the movement. Although we have initiated this process, for the values to act as a vision, they need to emerge internally from the movement and be co-created amongst as many people as possible in order for them to be effective.

It is important for the movement to have a shared vision where individuals can still keep their own personal purposes and business goals. Whether individuals in the movement are looking to ‘empower women in developing countries’, ‘to reduce textile waste’, ‘to make corporate social responsibility sexy’ or to ‘spread awareness about ethical fashion’, they can still keep these goals that are true to their business, as these are all ways in which they can contribute to the shaping of a sustainable society.

How can the Slow Fashion Values be Co-created?

Spreading the values to create a shared vision is the first strategic step for the Slow Fashion movement to begin moving toward sustainability. Shared visions have a way of spreading through personal contact, linking people and communities together.

While the Slow Fashion Values can be shared on-line, it would be best for them to be discussed at informal fashion community events and gatherings to foster dialogue around them. This setting allows people to get to the heart of their own purpose, establish a further connection to the larger movement and to encourage their peers.

Backcasting from a shared vision of success

Backcasting is a strategy used for planning towards a successful future, where the most desired vision of the future is created by a business, organization or community, and then step-by-step actions are put in place to move towards this vision (The Natural Step 2010).

They are meant to help focus what the movement can agree on as a goal, which is ‘contributing to a sustainable society’ rather than the smaller details of ‘how to do it’.

For the Slow Fashion Values to represent a vision of success for Slow Fashion, they should also be constrained by the four Sustainability Principles, as they are rooted in science. By using the principles in this way, the Slow Fashion movement will be strategic in its contribution to a sustainable society. The Sustainability Principles are general so that they are widely applicable, and concrete so as to inspire and guide actions.

As more people become involved with co-creating the shared vision, the diversity of intentions can dissipate the focus and generate conflicts towards the common goal. This is a key reason why it is strategic for the Slow Fashion movement to backcast from a vision that is constrained by the 4 Sustainability Principles (See Text Box: Basic Principles for achieving Sustainability).

Combined, the Slow Fashion Values and the Sustainability Principles can be used to achieve sustainability for the Slow Fashion movement.

1 Seeing the big picture

Slow Fashion producers recognize that they are all interconnected to the larger environmental and social system and make decisions accordingly. Slow Fashion encourages a systems thinking approach because it recognizes that the impacts of our collective choices can affect the environment and people.

2 Slowing down consumption

This is necessary to allow the earth's natural regeneration. Kate Fletcher's 2008 book, "Sustainable Fashion and Textiles: Design Journeys", describes how slowing down the use of raw materials by slowing down fashion production could allow the earth's regenerative capabilities to take place. This will alleviate pressure on the earth's natural production cycles so the Slow Fashion movement can be in a healthy rhythm with what the earth can naturally provide.

3 Diversity

Strength, resilience and beauty lie in diversity

Slow Fashion producers strive to maintain and increase ecological, social and cultural diversity, as diversity reduces vulnerability to a variety of threats.

4 Respecting People

Treating Others as They would like to be treated

Slow Fashion producers support and participate in codes of conduct and campaigns that help to employ, educate and inspire the fair treatment of people across borders.

5 Acknowledging Human Needs

Co-creating Slow Fashion encourages people to meet fundamental human needs by offering fashion with emotional significance. Human needs that can be met by fashion are creativity, identity, understanding and participation (Max-Neef 1991).

6 Building relationships

Collaboration and co-creation ensures trusting and lasting relationships that will create a stronger movement. Building relationships between producers and co-producers is a key part of the movement. As seen in Value 5, many Slow Fashion designers co-create garments or educate co-producers about their businesses (such as what standards they follow, where materials come from, and how the garment was made), which creates trust within those relationships.

“At the heart of building a shared vision is the task of designing and evolving ongoing processes in which people at every level of the organization, in every role, can speak from the heart about what really matters to them and be heard... by each other. The quality of this process, especially the amount of openness and genuine caring, determines the quality and power of the results. The (vision) can only emerge from a coherent process of reflection and conversation...”

Peter Senge

7 Resourcefulness

Many Slow Fashion designers focus on using locally abundant materials and resources when possible and try to support the development of local businesses and skills.

8 Maintaining quality and beauty

Encouraging classic design over today's trends will contribute to the longevity of garments, thus contributing to a sustainable society through decelerating consumption.

9 Profitability

Contributing to the economic strength of the industry

Slow Fashion producers need to make profits, and increase their visibility in the market to stay in the game and be competitive. Slow Fashion prices are often higher due to the incorporation of sustainable natural resources, safe working conditions and fair wages. Slow Fashion acts as a steward by keeping its prices fair and reflecting the true materials and craftsmanship in each garment.

10 Practicing Consciousness

Giving your heart and brain a chance

Slow Fashion producers make many decisions based on their personal passions, an awareness of their connection to others and the environment and their responsibility and willingness to act accordingly. It has been discovered that they genuinely care about satisfying human needs rather than simply the bottom line. Within the Slow Fashion movement, many people love what they do, and have a desire to make a difference in the world in a creative and innovative way.

CONCLUSION

We recognize that bringing the recommendations to life will require the utmost collaboration between individual designers, global supply chain networks, certification bodies and governments. As such, there are a number of challenges that need to be overcome to move the recommendations forward and to strengthen the Slow Fashion movement. At the same time, Slow Fashion presents a world of opportunities for establishing new sustainable business models, creating fulfilling and creative employment, and building lasting relationships. Overall, we hope that this research has inspired the Slow Fashion movement and allowed individuals to recognize their importance within the larger fashion industry and their role in helping shape a more sustainable society.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

This report is a summary of the full published thesis: “Slow Fashion: Tailoring a Strategic Industry Approach towards Sustainability”. Our research is intended to provide those working directly in the Slow Fashion industry (sustainable/eco/ethical designers, buyers, manufactures, growers etc.) with recommendations that can be carried out to help strengthen the movement and to spread awareness among co-producers.

We would like to continue to help move Slow Fashion forward by supporting these recommendations and Slow Fashion producers directly, as well as raising awareness with the general public. We intend to pursue three key areas: Education & Outreach, Communications & Networking, and Business Consulting.

We invite you to contact us at slowfashionfwd@gmail.com if you have any questions, comments and/or if you are interested in a professional collaboration. If you would like a copy of the full thesis, we would be pleased to pass it along. We also regularly update our online blog: slowfashionforward.tumblr.com

Thank you to everyone that participated in this valuable research!

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APPENDIX F SURVEY RESULTS

Survey administered March-April 2010

30 completed responses, 46 total submitted surveys

Breakdown of respondents: 33 Designer's, 14 Brand's, 4 Buyer's, 13 Manufacturer's

1. Can you describe the purpose of your business?

- To fulfill me creatively while making a living
- To empower women in rural villages and help keep children off the streets of Bali
- To develop a sustainable lifestyle culture, to ensure life of humans on the planet earth in the future.
- My purpose is to empower women to increase their identity and feel good about themselves.
- To provide affordable chemical-free clothing for babies while making a part time living for myself.
- To express my take on fashion...a creative outlet through clothing. Of course, there is a profit motivator as well.
- To create a venue for contemporary artists to create work that exists outside galleries and responds to the tradition of textile design.
- We aim to reduce textile waste by upcycling on a large scale and collaborating with larger companies to reduce their environmental impact
- To provide a quality, well-designed, 'considered' product to the children's wear market. Heirloom pieces with the intention of being kept and handed down through the generations.
- We design, produce and sell sustainable, fair trade clothing.
- Our purpose is to make beautiful things for people that are not mainstream, but more individual and to have them last
- Providing paper patterns for local small manufacturers.
- To produce clothing and textiles that not only respect the environment but allow an opportunity to create work that is one of a kind.
- Designing and selling handmade goods
- Provide sustainable clothing options for women, while creating awareness and raising funds for local animal shelters, and nature conservation groups.
- To create and produce on a small scale affordable, desirable clothes made entirely from recycled textiles.
- Providing socially and environmentally sustainable fashion to the 18-35 year old woman.
- To show to people that fair trade fashion is possible and to provide work and support to underprivileged ladies communities.
- Our members include the whole fashion "system" - from students to retailers, to manufacturers to boutique designers. We provide them with the tools, learning opportunities, big ideas and community they need to integrate "sustainable style" into their core business practice.
- To support designers and to spark a rethinking in the industry.
- We offer people the opportunity to sell and shop handmade year 'round.
- Show the world organic is fashion
- To turn corporate social responsibility sexy.
- We strive to be the antithesis to disposable fashion. To show that fashion can be conscious and cool.
- Support artisans by providing them with employment as well as train them on the basis of good quality
- The garment industry is one of the most detrimental and neglected industries we have. It is a place I have elected to elicit change through everything from business practices to prices to education

Sourcing Materials & Textiles

2. Which of the following materials are used in your garments? (select all that apply)

(28 answered, 18 skipped)

Certified organic cotton (21), bamboo (10), hemp (9), flax/linen (9), lyocell (9), recycled polyester (8), fair trade cotton (7), peace silk (4).

Other responses: Organic wool, recycled clothing, reclaimed textiles, soy, nylon waste hosiery, vegetable dyes, vegetable tinted leather, mohair

3. If you do not use the materials in Q2, are you interested in using them in the future?

(14 answered, 32 skipped) Yes = 100%

4. Do you have any plans to use any other sustainable alternative materials in the future? Please provide details:

(30 answered, 16 skipped)

- Local production of organic linen, wool and hemp, materials that would be possible to grow in Sweden
 - Developing custom weaves using soy fiber, milk fiber, Lenpur, Banana fiber and other alternatives that reduce the need for large scale agriculture
 - More sustainable silks as well as the potential of bamboo in clothing fibers
 - Recycled cloths for redesign. Organic Wool.
 - Recycled fabrics and natural pigment inks
 - New materials and fibres out of the mountain pine beetle wood in British Columbia
 - Others: Tencel, Organic dyes, peace silks, hemps, and recycled fabrics
5. What influences your choice of one sustainable material over another?
(33 answered, 13 skipped)
Minimize environmental impacts (25), locally accessible (17), price (15), consumer demand (11), abundance in the market (6).
6. What are the barriers to sourcing materials locally? Please provide suggestions for improvement:
(32 answered, 12 skipped)
- Price and certification: Price is high and not regionally sourced.
 - Fibres are certified, but 'certification' is unclear at times.
 - Not enough material choice locally.
 - No network of material sourcing knowledge.
 - It is hard for designers to meet minimum orders from mills for better pricing. Lower minimums are needed (30-50 metres)
 - Not enough local trade shows offering a selection of fabrics. Most sourcing is done online and via mail ordering of samples.
 - Education is needed to increased demand and increase economic viability for materials.
 - Local skill levels are low.
 - It is time consuming and expensive.
 - No textile business in USA
 - Supplies of environmentally conscious choices are scarce.
 - Borders and trade laws.
 - Most textiles mills are in India or China
7. Is there an online resource or publication that you use to compare the environmental impacts of each material?
(32 answered, 14 skipped)
Yes = 15%, No = 85%
8. If yes, what resource do you use? (8 answered, 38 skipped)
Sustainable websites, Google searches, treehugger.com
9. In general, what barriers have you encountered when sourcing sustainable materials? Do you have any suggestions for how this can be improved? (26 answered, 20 skipped)
- Fair trade certification is expensive.
 - Sharing material in a community can help designers 'practice with it', however, it needs to be ensured that it all doesn't look the same.
 - Get creative with local materials, they might not be traditional textiles.
 - Would like a direct link to Chinese producers instead of going through suppliers.
 - Lack of exposure to materials listed above needs to be addressed.
 - An intensive online material database/resource is needed for suppliers, recommendations, feedback, and fabric available by region...etc.
 - Many grey areas, such as 'organic'...it is hard to know if something is truly organic.
 - More selection is needed.
 - More transparency showing environmental impacts over entire life cycle.
 - Tax credits for organic and local materials should be implemented.
 - It is hard to communicate with foreign companies.
 - Need a better certification process for fabrics.

10. Are natural dyes used in your clothing line? (29 answered, 17 skipped)
Yes = 59%, No = 41%
11. If no, what are the challenges? Please provide your suggestions for improvement.
(13 answered, 33 skipped)
- No places available to dye, practice and color match.
 - Manufacturers could provide more information about the dye for garments.
 - We use low impact dyes due to large quantities.
 - There is misconception within the industry that all synthetics are bad, however, some do not use heavy metals. More awareness is needed around this issue.
 - Sometimes these dyes run on the 1,2,3 wash.
12. Are you interested in using natural dyes in the future? (31 answered, 15 skipped)
Yes = 97%, No = 3%

Garment Design

13. How long do you expect your garments to last in a typical consumers wardrobe?
(33 answered, 13 skipped)
- | | |
|------------------------|-------|
| One year | 6.5% |
| 2-3 years | 16.1% |
| 5 years or longer | 64.5% |
| I do not consider this | 12.9% |
14. How do you ensure the longevity of the clothing that you produce?
(31 answered, 15 skipped)
- Classic not trend based, design
 - Quality fabrics
 - Quality stitching (12 stitches per inch)
 - Made with love
 - Engage wearer in manufacture/design
 - Engage wearer in issues around sustainable fashion
 - Repairing and restyling influences longevity
 - Multi-use garment design
 - Cold water wash, air dried, hand washed.
 - Encourage heirlooms and hand-me-downs
 - Custom fit and design
 - Lifetime repair or redesign assistance
 - Skilled labour
 - Quality check
15. Do you use life-cycle thinking or eco-design principles when sourcing materials or designing garments?
(32 answered, 14 skipped)
Yes = 73%, No = 27%
16. If yes, can you please provide some specific details here: (23 answered, 23 skipped)
- Use organically produced materials
 - Use vintage fabrics
 - Recycled fibre for tags
 - Dye processes with no water or chemicals
 - Renting not buying, swapping not shopping
 - Make garments from recycled materials
 - Make garments from materials that are in closed loop scenarios
 - Make Fast Fashion with compostable materials.
 - Redesign old clothing
 - Tried to source recycling facilities, but no local options for this.

- Biodegradable packaging.
 - Try to weigh pro-cons of different materials
 - Use natural materials that will break down
 - Use long-lasting fabrics that can be reused
17. If no, would you be interested in having more support in life-cycle thinking or 'eco' design? Please provide suggestions for how you would like to receive this support:
(11 answered, 36 skipped)
- Yes, through newsletters, websites, and social media
 - Yes, online
 - Yes, emails
 - Yes, through green business advisors.
18. Do the designs or production methods in your business rely on traditional skills or cultural heritage?
Please provide details:
(26 answered, 21 skipped)
- I studied as a tailor dressmaker, and appreciate traditional handcraft skills. Not necessarily handmade but more of 'hands on process'. Passing on traditional skills of weaving with old fashioned looms and knowledge.
 - Beading and batiks are traditional Balinese art forms and are incorporated into our designs
 - I sew according to traditional skills with a flair of culture color.
 - I wish, but I believe they are all lost.
 - I focus on the artisanal aspect of making garments and textiles. These are skills that are quickly being lost. I believe in preserving these skills and educating the public on their importance in our society.
 - Yes, I have been sewing since age 2 and learned from my Great Grandmothers.
 - Yes, we have an entire collection made using traditional techniques like cross-stitch, crochet, embroidery, lace making. The labour is local women who know these techniques.
 - I fuse traditional skills with my modern background.
19. Do you restyle or co-design any garments with your customers?
(31 answered, 16 skipped)
Yes = 45%, No = 55%
20. If yes, please provide details on this process: (13 answered, 34 skipped)
- In some cases, remaking existing vintage garments into individual pieces.
 - We work with people on different lengths or samples of other products.
 - We try to work with individuals to restyle their clothing to a specific theme. Normally people are happy to hand it over, give a specification and receive an altered garment.
 - We work to do different colors, sleeveless, etc.
 - We collaborate with artists to make the fabric and editions.
 - Only for custom work.
 - Most garments are a collaboration between me and the client.
 - We take requests.

Brand and Retail

21. How many clothing lines are released per year? (28 answered, 19 skipped)
- Answered '1': 1
 - Answered '2': 15
 - Answered '3': 2
 - Answered '4': 2
 - 1-2 but consistently supply basics
 - 0-2
 - 3, depending on resources
 - 3,500 (approx) designers under one label
 - 40
 - 4 seasons a year of a main line
 - 4 now and pieces daily

22. What do you do with clothing that does not sell during its season? Please provide details:
(28 answered, 19 skipped)
- Usually the garments find a wearer. Others are kept for exhibition.
 - Keep on hand for trunk shows and sample sales
 - Sell in 'one off' stores in Shanghai, Beijing, Montreal, and Bali
 - Give as gifts
 - Sell on Ebay
 - Donate to Salvation Army
 - Sell as discount
 - Only produce to order (3)
 - Archive
 - Leave it up until it sells out
 - Donate to Dress for Success
 - Remake into other garments and accessories
 - Promotions to sell as soon as possible
 - Utilize pop-up stores
23. Do you currently have a take-back program for clothing?
(26 answered, 21 skipped)
Yes = 8%, No = 93%
24. If yes, are incentives provided to your customers to return these? Please provide details:
(5 answered, 42 skipped)
- I discount a percentage of materials and labour towards new garments
 - No
 - This does not apply to our business model
25. If yes, do you restyle these for future sale or return clothing for recycling? Please provide details:
(6 answered, 41 skipped)
- Restyle for future seasons
 - No
 - Yes, all the time
 - Yes, we return the items to hopefully be sold in other markets.
26. If no, do you have plans to start a take-back program in the future? Please provide details:
(22 answered, 25 skipped)
- No (many answers)
 - Yes, in the future I will redesign
 - Maybe
 - I hope people want to keep our clothes
 - We encourage a 'share' policy. Our garments are designed as heirloom pieces and we hope that they will be handed down and shared through generations.
 - No, we do not have the facilities for this
 - No, our company is too small
27. Does the retail price reflect the external social and environmental costs of producing the clothing? For example, are clothing producers paid a living wage for their skills? Do any profits go back into environmental preservation? Please provide details on your price structure: (25 answered, 22 skipped)
- I am particular about the whole process from seed to finished garment to be ethically and organically produced. The price of our clothes reflects the true cost.
 - Our price reflects the cost of manufacturing domestically; paying living wages and purchasing textiles that are much higher priced than conventional.
 - A percent of our profit goes to yayaan (YKPA) an orphanage in Bali.
 - Our profits go back into the business
 - Yes. That is why I like to work with fabric from North America and have the sewing done locally. (I can not afford to check out conditions in third world places, but I'm open to working with co-ops in the future)

- We pay over minimum wage. We are not making profit and cannot afford to give to charity. However, we run workshops and give lectures/seminars to encourage people to think about recycling and we educate the next generation of designers. Our price structure varies greatly due to the nature of the product. Some pieces cost a lot due to handwork.
- Pay workers a living wage.
- Produced locally
- Unfortunately the cost to produce keeps going up while the buyer wants to pay less.
- We manufacture fair trade.
- My dress line is priced slightly higher than average because of the 'handmade in USA' stamp and the cost of production.
- \$2 from sales of most of our pieces go to local animal welfare/nature conservation charities.
- Price depends on how long it takes to make.
- 20% of what you pay for our garments goes directly to the development of the communities we work with. So far we are only working with the social aspect of fair trade. The environmental aspect is always in our mind and we will start investing on it shortly.
- Our prices reflect the higher price point of local production, living wage, organic cotton etc. This ensures we are supporting organic farmers/mills and local production. It is an ecosystem that supports ethical production from start to finish.

Community Development & Environmental Preservation

28. Do you donate any of your profits to a grassroots environmental organization or to community group/project?
(27 answered, 20 skipped)
Yes = 22%, No = 73%
29. If yes, can you please provide details (percentage of sales or products, and details on the organization or project):
(7 answered, 40 skipped)
- We offset our carbon emissions by purchasing carbon offsets which get invested into alternative energy projects.
 - 2% of profits as well as about 10 hours of volunteer time a week go to the yayasan. www.yayasan.org
 - We often donate 10 % to a women's shelters
 - 2 per sale of specific pieces go to help animal charities.
 - I typically donate about \$500 per year to different organizations.
 - Right now there are no profits to donate. I do participate in many community causes through donations of goods and gift certificates, and support through hosting events and advertising through my email list.
30. If no, do you have any future plans for supporting communities or environmental organizations? Please provide details:
(19 answered, 28 skipped)
- I believe by working with these fabrics and hoping to spread the word for sustainability, it is a supportive collaboration. If I get a possibility in the future, I would like to do more for specific projects, such as saving old growth forests, birds and similar.
 - I have plans to make a project with women's in developing countries.
 - In 3 years but I do attend environmental seminars to learn what materials to use to save the environment.
 - I do, but I am still a new company and have not really made a profit yet! Will probably support a local child support group and one environmental group in the future
 - We will be looking for charity work in the coming months, may not be directly related to the business
 - When we make enough money, yes!
 - We have supplied garments to charity events to generate profit for their charity.
 - I would like to work with local youth organizations, offering training.

Industry Collaboration & Communication

31. Do you collaborate with your suppliers or stakeholders on sustainability issues?
(26 answered, 21 skipped)
Yes = 39%, No = 61%
32. If yes, what are some of the successes/challenges you have faced in this process?
(11 answered, 36 skipped)

- We try to promote organic fibers and vegetable dyes locally by educating the suppliers.
 - I find getting information from the mills very difficult. It may be because I am still a small operation.
 - Discussions on certifications between my main supplier and I. More discussion overall, try to improve transparencies on fabric suppliers.
 - Success: really nice bright colors.
 - Challenge: Availability of organic cotton.
 - Challenge: price fluctuations
 - We partner each year with St. Vincent de Paul's Discarded to Divine project where we raise the subject with the public while utilizing discarded garments to make new ones to auction for the benefit of the poor.
 - Hand woven and hand dyed fabrics are not perfect
 - The supplier I was collaborating with went bankrupt and closed down.
 - Organic cotton is expensive and there are only a few suppliers who do not have a lot of stake. Therefore it is tempting to settle on other fabrics.
33. Do you communicate sustainability information (environmental or social/ethical) of your operations to your consumers?
(27 answered, 20 skipped)
Yes = 85%, No = 15%
34. If yes, please provide details on how this is communicated (is this via websites, through garment labels, in your retail store or through dialogue?):
(24 answered, 23 skipped)
- Direct contact/dialogue with customers in our retail/showroom environment
 - Blog to promote awareness.
 - Flyers
 - Garment labels
 - Website
 - Seminars, lectures and workshops
 - Twitter and Facebook
 - Media interviews
 - Teaching
 - Fashion fairs
 - Email blasts
 - Our studio is the shop so people can see production first hand.
35. If yes, What challenges and successes have you experienced in communicating sustainability? Please provide details:
(21 answered, 26 skipped)
- People's lack of understanding regarding the general environmental impact of the fashion industry.
 - Everyone talks the talk but no one walks the walk.
 - People don't feel it has anything to do with them/they can't change/they don't have enough money/don't want to be seen in the 'same' clothes all the time/they follow 'fashion' and want a different look every week to keep up with trends.
 - People are surprised at the fact that recycled materials look good.
 - Building a reputation locally.
 - Showing people how to work with clothes is a great way to encourage them not to throw them away. The website is in constant use by students and we are always happy to offer them one on one interviews to help with their studies etc.
 - Challenges on discussing the true price.
 - Success: loyal customers
 - People are usually inspired to make a difference after our conversation
 - I always enjoy being asked a question I don't know the exact answer to. It pushes me to look into things further and I'm always learning about sustainability issues and better ways to do things.
 - It's not the 'selling factor' - most customers don't care. But if someone is already purchasing something, and we tell them about sustainability and our work with the charity groups, they feel good about their purchase.
 - I have clients who will say point blank "I don't care about that stuff".

- It's vital to make it totally clear what the clothes are made from and how, having it on the garment labels is probably the most successful
- Generally, people have very little knowledge & are very confused so they are impressed to hear my impressions about it all.
- Communicating is either made too easy with marketing "green wash" or too complicated with metrics and technical terms that the average consumer doesn't understand. The trick is finding a balance.
- No challenges, only advantages.
- We have been successful in encouraging and increasing awareness on sustainability as customers have purchased items from our ethical labels.
- I believe many consumers do not think about the origins of the products they consumer, I feel like we have lost touch with the process of creation, it is an important yet difficult task to try and educate people without being preachy or judgmental.

Regulations & Codes of Conduct

36. What voluntary codes of conduct do you participate in? (Please select all that apply):

(5 answered, 42 skipped)

Business Social Compliance Initiative	40.0%	2
Ethical Trade Initiative	60.0%	3
Fair Labor Association	40.0%	2
Fair Wear Foundation	40.0%	2
SA8000 or Social Accountability International	20.0%	1
Worldwide Responsible Apparel Production		

37. Is your business or your suppliers impacted by environmental or social regulations (Labour and ethical standards, Pollution control)?

(17 answered, 30 skipped)

Yes = 47%, No = 53%

38. If yes, please list these and describe how these impacts your business:

(11 answered, 36 skipped)

- Tighter EPA restrictions because we use domestic companies
- There are no restrictions in Indonesia. This impacts us negatively because people locally and internationally neither expect nor demand the regulations. We are trying to pioneer this demand and expectation on the local level.
- Many of our fabric suppliers have developed production with lower impact on the environment and are still working towards these goals.
- Suppliers are regulated, prices are not as sharp and quality is good.
- Season affects the quality of silk and we are constantly waiting for the supplier to get his shipment from India.
- Canadian labour laws ensure workers at the manufacturing facilities we work with are paid fairly, entitled to vacation pay, etc.
- They are all members of WFTO.
- Labeling can often be mandated to the point of trivial information at the cost of the business
- I only work with companies that can supply certified goods.

39. Will future regulations impact your business or your suppliers (for example EU REACH, extended producer responsibility regulations, carbon taxes, environmental regulations)?

(19 answered, 28 skipped)

Yes = 53%, No = 47%

40. If yes, please comment on how they will impact your business:

(12 answered, 35 skipped)

- Increased cost of production and sourcing.
- For us to be certified under the 'Fair Trade' label it will cost us thousands of US dollars. It is unaffordable. It is meant to support sustainability, why is the price so unattainable?
- Hopefully carbon taxes will give us an advantage as we are now so low on carbon usage throughout our production.

- I assume carbon tax will effect ocean shipping costs, more regulation in China will make prices rise too, even in good factories.
- I guess so, and have no idea how.
- If future regulations cost money, we might not survive, as we are a small business on a tight budget..
- Taxes are currently too high.

41. How do you keep updated on changing regulations and standards?

(15 answered, 32 skipped)

- Online research
- I rely on Canadian labour laws for my local manufacturing.
- We are involved with EFF and have regular contact with lots of other key brands in our sector. We do not meet the criteria for most standards, as we are making recycled and most regulations effect virgin fabrics.
- Word of mouth
- Talking with other designers on the internet.
- Read the news.
- Industry newsletters (from different sectors as well.
- Through the CFIB
- I do not

42. Please provide any general comments on how regulations, standards codes of conduct provide opportunities or present challenges:

(10 answered, 37 skipped)

- I personally contact subcontractors and fabric suppliers to know the process.
- I have not had to deal with this yet.
- If we can meet standards and regulations they will benefit us and quality us as an ethical business with publicity opportunities.
- We will tell the story behind the garment
- More regulation and talk about the environment is good for our business. But the regulations are more like recommendations and are not enforced.
- The USA is not regulated, it is self-imposed rules.

Eco-Labeling

43. Are you currently using any of the following eco-labels? (Please select all that apply):

(8 answered, 39 skipped)

Fair Trade	50.0%	4
Certified Organic Cotton	62.5%	5
OEKO TEX STANDARD 100	37.5%	3
Global Eco-labeling network	0.0%	0
Bluesign Label	0.0%	0
Made-By label	25.0%	2
Luxury Eco-label	0.0%	0
European Eco-label	0.0%	0

44. If you use eco-labels, do you see how can be improved? Please offer suggestions:

(8 answered, 39 skipped)

- I do not know where to get them. No supplier I can find has these listed. All of my clothes are made in the USA
- It can be better marketed so people know what the certification means.
- The money from these goes to the West and not poor communities in the East.
- Transparency and pricing could help as they all cost a fortune and it is hard for a small company.
- We need clear labeling.
- I use my own version of these labels when in production with my goods- i have not received any labels from outside agencies.

45. If you do not use eco-labels, can you tell us why not and what are the biggest barriers for a company to be awarded an eco-label? Please provide details:

(12 answered, 35 skipped)

- Very expensive to have individual designs certified. Instead I choose transparency (where is the garment made and with what) and I show the organic certification of the fabric.
 - Control of supply chain
 - Start up issues
 - Time, no time to seek it out.
 - Money required to attain label makes it not worth it to us. We know we are fair trade and act socially and ethically responsible.
 - Existing eco labels are too weak in their marketing. We need ONE strong system that is well known by consumers and there is confidence in it. Maybe three levels.
 - I was not aware of eco labels before this survey.
 - Our small size gives us control of the product.
 - We are investigating the other eco-labels to see if we can qualify for them.
46. Would you support a globally recognized, third party, eco-label to certify social and environmental impacts for the entire life-cycle of the garment?
(24 answered, 23 skipped)
Yes = 96%, No = 4%

Slow Fashion

47. In general, what does 'sustainability' mean to your business? (14 answered, 33 skipped)
- The direction everything in on our earth needs to go.... consuming only what you must, buying only what you need, and creating with an awareness that everything we eat, wear, buy has an impact.
 - That our lifestyle is in harmony with the nature so the environment we know today with humans, animals and plants can also exist in 7 generations from now.
 - Providing a framework and network between people in which fashion is valued and enjoyed and the stories behind the production of manufacture are shared and transparent. That there is no such thing as waste and a culture of passed on clothing exists amongst the majority of people who can easily access and be taught techniques or skills to restyle/alter/repair their garments
 - Using eco friendly materials that natural fibers and help the green economy.
 - Trying to make the smallest impact on the environment while still running a business and making money.
 - Keeping cash flow
 - Keeping creative
 - Repeat intelligent customers
 - Everything, it is not just a practice but a lifestyle
 - Utilizing materials that can be recycled.
 - Sustainability is not just confined to our product; it is everything on the business side as well. We want healthy relationships and employees so that they provide the best they can do and everyone is happy!
 - Not over producing any collection, we only produce to order and never destroy our garments. Raw materials are all used up and never wasted. This is natural with a small business as everything is very tight and well used. In ensuring that very little is wasted we then in return hope that the customer will respect and care for their item, prolonging the life of the garment.
 - We want to be able to run a business that supports artists, supports us and does as little harm as possible to the environment.
 - Quality made, long lasting versatile and classic lined garments are sustainable... instead of the one season, trendy designs that don't last. Having garments made in a production house that pays fair wages, has flexible working hours. This creates for a more quality made garment and being environmentally conscientious in all aspects of sourcing, from fabrics to office supplies, etc.
 - At present the most important meaning of the word sustainable is in reference to our financial set up and as we are growing and incurring increasing costs, we need to make sure we can secure enough business per season to cover them. Also we have now employed a full time member of staff and our price point has gone up so sales are the key to sustaining our business at present. We will aim to continually improve the environmental sustainability in future by investing in new fabrics, processes and techniques whilst making discerning choices about which ones we invest in.
48. What would be the benefits for your business of joining the Slow Fashion movement?
(23 answered, 24 skipped)

- Learning more about what other companies in the industry are doing and cross-educating both other manufacturers and consumers with new or exciting ways of doing things in a more sustainable way.
- Strong focus and cooperation for a sustainable fashion industry.
- To link with others who are passionate about the same values and to learn the ways in which they inspire others
- This will allow my products to be sold with the new green movement.
- It aligns with my company mission
- We are not interested in joining a movement or labeling ourselves.
- We aim to offer a constant/trans-seasonal range, moving closer to 'slow fashion'.
- I've thought about switching to an 'open' line and moving away from the 2 seasons per year production. It's a hard switch though because the retailers are so used to booking their orders twice a year.
- Our work would be appreciated on another level, access to a market that values handmade, locally made, and thoughtfully sourced materials.
- Communicating to the customer the benefits of sustainable fashion. Educating and encouraging the consumer.
- Benefits would be great for the workforce in Vancouver and organic cotton grown in USA
- The benefit is to the planet.
- I have been producing slow clothes since the late nineties and I am not about to change that. I am passionate about making a change in our consumption habits and educating the public forum on the practices that continue to exist in the industry. It is equally important to me that I educate people on the work I do and why it is so important culturally, socially and economically in today's society.
- We joined before you had a label!
- It's my personal value and beliefs.
- Meeting and possibly collaborating with like minded people, information exchange
- We are all about Slow Fashion, I come from over 11 years working as a designer for high street and I hated it so much that I started my own business to prove to people that slow fashion is possible and that is the future.
- Further driving the industry forward on tackling ethical issues rather being a hindrance on sustainability.
- Not sure
- I am happy to do what I believe in
- Power in groups and educating without carrying all the weight
- Brand awareness
- I believe I am already a part of that movement.

49. Would you be interested in connecting to others in the movement?

(27 answered, 20 skipped)

Yes = 100%, No = 0%

50. In general, what do you think it's missing and required for the Slow Fashion movement to be stronger and to reach a wider consumer base? Please provide your comments:

(22 answered, 25 skipped)

- Grass roots activism. It is all fine and good for us all in the industry to talk to one another. But we already know all the problems and we are already working towards solutions. But what about the workers in the textile industries in developing countries? What about other manufacturers for large multinationals in areas where there are no regulations? We need to get out and be speaking with and educating those who know nothing about global warming; it's impacts, and their options. It is silly to bring sand to the beach.
- I don't really know enough about it to know what is missing.
- There are not any seminars focused on the sewer, buyer, designer in using there materials to help our environment.
- Simplify terminology, labels, and accreditation so consumers don't have to do so much research to learn about what they are buying.
- PR, if we want to work as part of the fashion industry and compete with people who work without strong ethical codes we have to as good as them at PR, advertising, branding, etc.
- A friendly network to share information. On the business side it is all very secretive, no one wants to give away suppliers etc. To have a neutral platform to go for information would be great. Interestingly the UKFT.org and launched a 'lets make it here' program linking UK business and manufactures together.
- Visibility.
- More internet presence: websites devoted to slow fashion. Bringing the consciousness out to the public more. Changing the way people think about buying clothing. Changing the idea that lines need to be booked twice a

- More internet presence: websites devoted to slow fashion. Bringing the consciousness out to the public more. Changing the way people think about buying clothing. Changing the idea that lines need to be booked twice a year at the same times each year.
- People have to care about production chain, people are becoming more apathetic about fashion chain, grown ups think it is acceptable to shop at forever21 and throw shirts away after 2 or 3 washes (because they fall apart and look gross) but still, this is unacceptable for working people and should be left to high school kid's. People should be more aware about how much they buy and throw away.
- Education
- Promotion
- More media coverage and education not to mention the industry recognizing its importance.
- Press, global awareness - a "whole foods for clothing"
- When bigger labels start becoming more eco-friendly is when the consumer will have a different approach to these issues. We need more media attention as well.
- Attraction rather than promotion
- The fear to be lifted, it has to be attractive, luxurious and affordable for people to join.
- To be further promoted within the industry.
- Product, product & product. Also deal with the politicians and the high street retailers to band fast fashion as they have put higher taxes in alcohol...fast fashion is causing big problems all over the world and we need the power of politicians and the greediness of high street retailers to change this
- Consumers have been demanding eco-fashion for a long time. Everyone says they are willing to pay more for something made ethically and sustainably by local designers. However, people still spend more at H&M and other retail giants for the cheap fast fashion. I think the culture and attitude towards spending needs to change before we all get buried in a mountain of garbage... but how?
- When Joe 6Pack gets it, then it'll work. Throwaway clothing needs to stop being the norm in the US.

APPENDIX 2 STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Industry Collaboration & Communication		
Co Create Slow Fashion Values	Short-Term ³	Slow Fashion producers, sustainability practitioners
Establish a Slow Fashion network	Short-Term	Slow Fashion producers, sustainability practitioners
Create an online mapping tool connected to the Slow Fashion network that displays Slow Fashion designers & retailers by City/Country for easy co-producer access.	Short-Term & on-going	Online network, Slow Fashion designers and retailers
Increase communication between Slow Fashion designers/retailers and co-producers to facilitate flow of information on the details on sustainable garment production and material sourcing.	Short-Term & on-going	Fashion designers, brands, retailers and co-producers
Education & Outreach		
Create partnerships with fashion Colleges, Blekinge Institute of Technology (BTH) and The Natural Step (TNS) to educate on the Sustainability Principles and Strategic Sustainable Development and to integrate these concepts into the curriculum.	Short-Term & on-going	BTH, The Natural Step & fashion design Colleges, sustainability practitioners
Offer The Natural Step sustainability workshops for fashion designers. Workshops can provide designers with a background on the core concepts of Strategic Sustainable Development and Sustainability.	Short-Term & on-going	Fashion designers, The Natural Step, sustainability practitioners
Increased education for fashion designers on life-cycle garment design & sustainable design practices such as using recycled textiles, compostable fabrics and remaking existing garments.	Short-Term & on-going	Fashion Colleges, designers, sustainability practitioners
Create a social marketing campaign to inform co-producers on the benefits of the Slow Fashion movement to generate awareness, excitement and interest for sustainable fashion consumption, sewing & repair skills, clothes swapping, and responsible care and disposal.	Short-Term	sustainability practitioners
Increase educational programs among co-producers in regards to sustainable fashion consumption, sewing and repair skills, and the end of life of clothing and textiles.	Short-Term	Schools, NGOs, fashion designers
Sourcing Materials & Textiles		
Create networks of collaborating designers/brands by region; with the idea that they could buy a minimum quantity of organic/fair-trade/dead-stock/or other new crops and textiles therefore allowing them to meet minimum orders and be able to support farmers growing new 'higher risk' materials (Shiffrin, 2010).	Short-Term	Online textile/fibre platforms
Provide bank loans for farmers of more sustainable fibres such as rain fed cotton, hemp, and bamboo.	Short-Term	Banking sector

³ Short term is 1-3 years, medium term is 3-5 years and long-term is 5 years or longer

Sourcing Materials & Textiles cont...		
Educate banks about the investment benefits vs. investment risks for rain fed cotton farming to increase support (Sanfilippo 2007).	Short-Term	Sustainability practitioners, farmers
A commitment to buying an upcoming harvest of a rain fed cotton crop (at least 30% buy in but 60% is preferred); this could help facilitate access to credits and give financial institutions the insurance they need to grant less expensive loan to these farmers (Sanfilippo 2007).	Short-Term	Brands, textile manufacturers
Local textile manufacturers should add small overruns to their production to gives small designers the opportunity to grow their business to, in time, also be able to order an entire run, which in turn will boost production for the textile mills (Shiffrin, 2010).	Short-Term	Textile mills, designers, brands
Make dead stock and surplus fabrics/overruns from larger textile/garment manufacturers accessible to smaller designers. Get this connected to the market via a web database (Shiffrin, 2010).	Short-Term	Textile, garment manufacturers, small designers
Encourage collaboration between online marketplace databases such as www.pan-germany.net, www.source4style.com etc. organicexchange.org or elsewhere to make the comparing and buying of organic fabrics easier (Shiffrin, 2010).	Short-Term	Online networks
Invest in R&D to start developing technologies to allow for treatment of new sustainable fibres such as hemp, nettle, bamboo and others.	Short-Term	Research centres, Universities, National governments
Invest in recycling mills, implement residential textile recycling programs, and increase community “recycling banks” for textiles.	Short-Term	Municipalities, NGOs, charities & textile brokers
Expand organic certification for bamboo to all countries globally to create awareness around the difference processes and impacts of the fiber (Delano 2007).	Medium-Term	GOTS & other organic certification bodies
R & D for the natural dyeing process.	Medium-Term	Research centres, Universities, National governments
Conduct market research to determine the viability of growing raw material (plants, trees) for natural dyes.	Medium-Term	Governments, Universities, farmers
Brand and retail		
Conduct market research on the viability of starting a brand or retail take-back program for used garments.	Short-Term	Brands, retailers, sustainability practitioners
Collaborate with existing garment recycling initiatives to expand their use (i.e. ECO CIRCLE).	Short-Term	Brands & retailers
Implement a “lifetime” policy for garments, by offering repair or restyling services for the garment, educating the co-producer on how to extend the lifespan of the garments (handing down the garment to other co-producers), or through multi-functional design.	Short-Term	Brands & retailers

Regulations, codes of conduct and labeling		
To ensure a stable stock of recycled textiles, there could be legislation for all textile producers & garment manufacturers to support or have their own take-back program similar to the electronics industry.	Short-Term	National governments, EU
Provide subsidies or tax credits to domestic textile producers (in Canada, US and European countries) to support a local & sustainable textile industry.	Short-Term	National governments
Improve social marketing of existing eco-labels such as GOTS, certified organic and Fair Trade so that co-producers are educated on the meaning of the labels and can identify them.	Short-Term	GOTS, certified organic and other eco-labeling schemes
Create a Slow Fashion Garment Label	Medium-Term	Textile & garment labeling certification entities, Slow Fashion producers
Remove subsidies to conventional cotton production and provide subsidies and tax credits to local material producers of emerging sustainable materials.	Medium-Term	National governments
Establish global environmental standards for garment & textile industry that can be monitored and enforced.	Long-Term	National governments, UN