



circularity for  
apparel and footwear

# Two Years of Progress

2019-2021





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# .01 Message From Our Chair

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**Baptiste Carrière-Pradal**  
Chair of the Policy Hub

**When is the right time to take an invention out of a testing lab and scale it? How does one decide that the knowledge acquired is robust enough to be made mandatory through policies?**

The planet's clock is ticking and its cardiac rhythm is accelerating, as environmental and social issues continue to rise.

The solution has imposed itself on all actors in the apparel and footwear industry:

time to act is now and the Policy Hub strives to facilitate this action by uniting the industry.

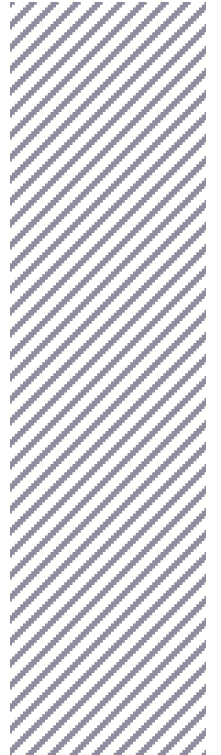
To date, our industry has been subjected to a very limited number of policies. Going forward, this is going to change significantly. From the way textiles are being designed, to the way in which they are sourced, produced and sold, and ultimately given a second or third life. Each life stage of our products will, and need to be, impacted and governed by a coherent and progressive set of policies.

We are at a pivotal moment in time: we must pick and choose from decades of relevant experiments, at various scales, between different protocols, systems, tools and methods. Some are created by individual organisations, some by innovative civil society organisations, and others are already scale proof,

having been developed by cross-border coalitions and alliances.

Moving forward, it is imperative to assess and select the key principles and operational concepts from the options available to us that can be turned into policies. Once we have identified the path, the methods and the systems that shall be mandated, we will then have created suitable grounding to align all our ecosystems around. This will allow for the unlocking of support in innovation and infrastructure to accelerate progress, particularly towards SMEs, showing a clear path to all actors in the value chain. Only then will the term 'collective action' take on its full potential.

This, however, is not an easy task. There are major complexities that we will face throughout, and it will be near impossible keeping all the relevant parties happy. Nonetheless, it is time to get out of our labs and to agree that we cannot wait for yet another more



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complex and more precise tool, agreement or conference.

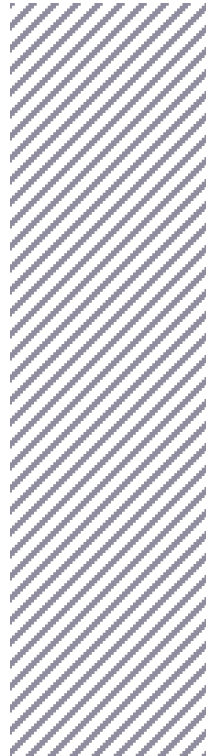
We will not elevate the millions of actors in the industry by continuing down the same path that only focuses on the refinement of the industry's front runners.

Whilst policy makers and citizens team up to achieve their ambitions of regulating our sector, we must acknowledge the limits of our own science and conviction. We must navigate down the path that will convert the agreed grounding into policies, while still allowing enough freedom for research and innovations to continue to flourish. There are discoveries yet to be made that will act as the seeds for a blooming future in textile regulation. To ensure that all actors have a say and that all voices are heard – discussions, going forward, need to be inclusive. While being comprehensive, their output needs to be practical,

scalable, simple, actionable and comprehensible for all citizens. This is neither a compliance exercise nor an academic one: it is an earth and humanity saving one.

Now that the direction is agreed upon and the principle established, it is time to sail and go towards a steep curve to reduce our impact. We have a two year opportunity window opening to create this set of policies for our sector. This is unique and unprecedented. To succeed, we will always be looking forward to welcoming more expertise, more convictions and hands in our ship.

**We invite you to join us at the Policy Hub: contribute to our work, or challenge us, but in any case - act.**



# .02 Voices of Our Partners

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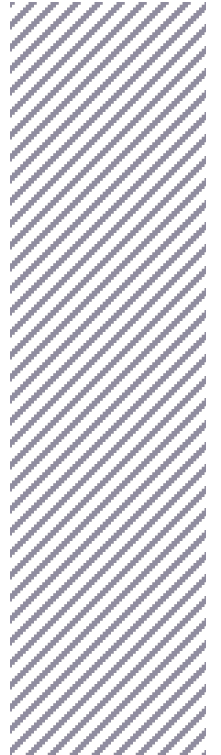
## Sustainable Apparel Coalition

The SAC is a global multi-stakeholder non-profit alliance for the fashion industry. It's made up of more than 250 leading apparel, footwear and textile, brands, retailers, suppliers, service providers, trade associations, non-profits, NGOs, and academic institutions working to reduce environmental impact and promote social justice throughout the global value chain.

*“As a global non-profit alliance, we believe there is a critical need for close partnership between government and industry experts to accelerate positive industry change. By collaborating with industry, stakeholders, and policymakers, the Policy Hub can help shape policy that drives holistic, coordinated efforts towards sector-wide circularity. As we seek to build back better, it will take all actors, from industry to government, working together towards a more sustainable future.”*



**Amina Razvi**  
Executive Director at  
Sustainable Apparel Coalition



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## FESI

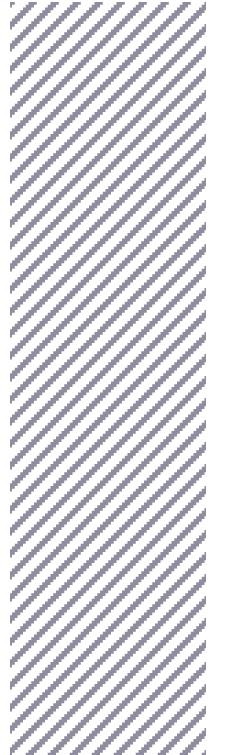
FESI is the unique pre-competitive platform representing the interests of the sporting goods industry in Europe, advancing its members' priorities and promoting initiatives that benefit the sector, EU citizens, and the society as a whole. FESI represents the interests of approx. 1.800 sporting goods manufacturers (85% of the European market).

*"Over the past 2 years, we are proud that the sporting goods industry has proactively engaged with the Policy Hub in discussions around circularity in the textile and footwear sector at an early stage. Significant coordination work took place and we managed to align the industry actors from various horizons around many critical topics. It has not always been easy, but we know our work is moving in the right direction and that is gratifying. There is still a lot to do when it comes to setting all the technical details together with policy makers, but we are confident in our capacity of coordinating efforts."*



**Jérôme Pero**

General Secretary at Federation of the European Sporting Goods Industry



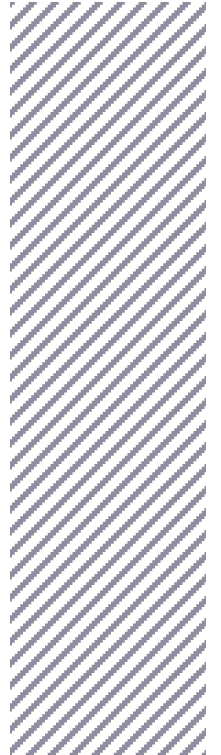
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## Global Fashion Agenda

GFA is the leading forum for industry collaboration and public-private co-operation on fashion sustainability. Its mission is to make sustainability fashion's first priority and to mobilise and guide the fashion industry to take bold and urgent action on sustainability.

*“Many companies from the fashion sector are stepping up their sustainability initiatives but in order to increase the sustainability performance of the industry as a whole, we strongly need the support of policymakers to build the right frameworks and incentive structures. I am impressed by the current political ambitions for our industry and welcome the forthcoming EU Textile Strategy. As a founding member of the Policy Hub, Global Fashion Agenda is fully committed to mobilising and convening all stakeholders to repurpose business models and policymakers to activate change.”*

**Federica Marchionni**  
CEO at Global Fashion Agenda



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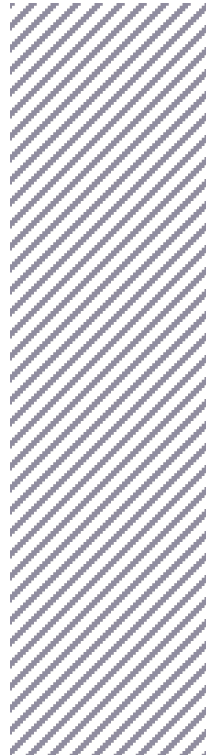
## Textile Exchange

Textile Exchange guides leaders toward positive impact by starting at the source—raw materials and fibres. Through certified standards, benchmarking and measurement, and a platform that advances proven solutions, we guide brands, growers and manufacturers to positive impact.

*“As an industry, we are facing complex problems that require systems-level change, and policy is going to play a crucial part in enabling this change. At Textile Exchange we are dedicated to building community and connections by promoting the acceleration of the use of preferred materials, with a focus on carbon reduction, soil health, water, and biodiversity. We are pleased to be a part of The Policy Hub, working alongside key partners to share our experience on what is required to transform the system at the raw material level.”*



**La Rhea Pepper**  
CEO at Textile Exchange





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## ZDHC Foundation

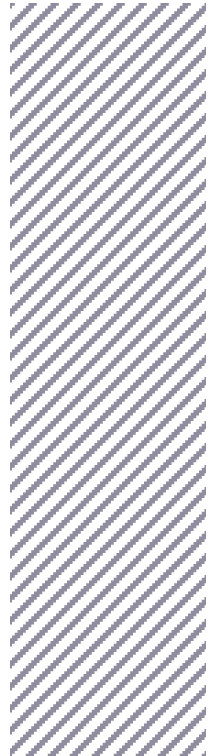
The ZDHC Foundation oversees the implementation of the Roadmap to Zero Programme and is a global multi-stakeholder initiative of more than 160 contributors within the fashion and footwear industry. The vision is widespread implementation of sustainable chemistry, driving innovations, and best practices to protect consumers, workers, and the environment. The ZDHC Foundation uses collaborative engagement to drive a holistic, industry-focussed, and practical approach to sustainable chemical management.

*“The ZDHC Roadmap to Zero Programme brings together industry stakeholders to pioneer and implement future-embracing solutions in sustainable chemical management in the textile and leather value chain. We are part of the solution to critical environmental issues such as; improving water and air quality as well as supporting biodiversity. We joined Policy Hub to share our point of view and experience with other partner organisations and their member companies to form a joint approach and drive collective action.”*



**Frank Michel**

Executive Director at the ZDHC Foundation



# .03 Who We Are

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## About us

The Policy Hub unites the apparel and footwear industry to speak in a shared voice and propose policies that accelerate circular practices.

We facilitate discussions with industry leaders, policy makers, and civil society to support the apparel and footwear industry in closing the loop of their businesses.

## Vision

Our vision is to encourage an ambitious policy framework that accelerates the transformation of the entire apparel and footwear industry towards circularity.

## Mission

- To provide an ambitious policy direction for the apparel and footwear industry.
- To educate the industry, policy makers, and stakeholders in providing information and facts about apparel and footwear supply chains.
- To facilitate discussions on transformational policies by providing a platform of exchange.



# .04 How It All Started

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## The Policy Hub

The Policy Hub - Circularity for Apparel & Footwear consists of five partner organisations including Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC), Global Fashion Agenda (GFA), Federation of the European Sporting Goods Industry (FESI), Textile Exchange (TE), and the ZDHC Foundation, and one funding partner, Laudes Foundation. Together, these organisations represent more than 50% of the apparel and footwear industry and consist of different stakeholders including brands, retailers, manufacturers, and NGOs.

**The Policy Hub was born out of the existing partnerships between the SAC's Policy Task Team with the Federation of the European Sporting Goods Industry (FESI) and the Global Fashion Agenda (GFA).**

**In early 2018**, the EU authorities explored a potential update of the Circular Economy Action Plan 1.0 with a focus on textiles, thus intensifying discussions between the three partner organisations. The objective was to leverage each other's expertise and to bring a unified yet ambitious voice of the sector to European policy makers.

**In 2019**, this collaborative spirit of the three founding partners was manifested in the official launch of the Policy Hub - Circularity for Apparel & Footwear. Funded by Laudes Foundation (formerly C&A Foundation) the work kicked-off in May 2019. Ever since the Policy Hub's scope of work are policies that accelerate circularity for the apparel

and footwear sector.

Given the interest in the European Union to legislate the sector, the work has, to date, been focused on engagement in Brussels and EU Member States.

**In 2021**, the three founding partners were joined by Textile Exchange and the ZDHC Foundation - with this the Policy Hub grew significantly and now consists of five partner organisations. These organisations represent immense expertise in diverse areas of textiles, including design, manufacturing, supply chains, certifications, the use of chemicals, and sustainable fashion. We use this joint knowledge to advocate for better and more efficient policies that lead to the outcome we all collectively desire to achieve - the circular apparel and footwear industry.



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## Highlights from the Past Two Years

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**20** Civil society organisations we are in dialogue with

**4** Published position papers (and three more papers are underway)

**2** Letters sent to the European Commission (one co-signed with CSOs)

**5** Partner organisations: Textile Exchange and the ZDHC Foundation joined the founding partners.

**7** Contributions to EU consultations

**> 40** Meetings with the EU Policy makers

**> 70** Hours of facilitation meetings with participating organisations

**6** Workshops and public events organised



# .06 Guiding the Industry Towards Circularity

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*To achieve our vision to create an ambitious policy framework that accelerates circularity, we work with our participant organisations and the civil society to develop positions that reflect a need for change and promote sustainable business practices.*

In the last two years, we saw a rapid increase in regulatory actions aimed to address sustainability-related issues.

With the EU's commitments to climate neutrality as part of the European Green Deal and the launch of the Circular Economy Action Plan, there is an urge to address the negative environmental and social impacts within the apparel and footwear industry.

To contribute to this call of action, the Policy Hub – Circularity for Apparel & Footwear, has worked on a range of topics covering some of the key issues related to accelerating circularity and sustainability within our sector:

- Building blocks for a circular economy for textiles and footwear;
- Supporting Covid-19 recovery actions;
- Better design for greater circularity;
- Leading the discussions on EPR and waste;
- Focusing on transparency.

*"Policy making is a complex process with far-reaching consequences on the industry and society. Thus, we need access to the best knowledge and wider stakeholder perspectives. I am happy to see how Policy Hub convenes this space with a lot of engagement and collaboration between industry, policy makers, NGOs, and other relevant stakeholders. As a credible voice of the industry, Policy hub is striving for the creation of alignment and progressive policy framework to accelerate the circular economy in the fashion industry. We, from Lenzing, are part of this co-creation process and contribute with our expertise and driven by Lenzing's vision to make net-zero world come true."*

**Krishna Manda**, Senior Manager Sustainability integration at Lenzing AG



# Building Blocks for a Circular Economy for Apparel and Footwear

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The Policy Hub is committed to accelerating circularity, which, above all, must bring genuine benefits to the environment and the people, and generate innovative and sustainable economic opportunities for the textile industry.

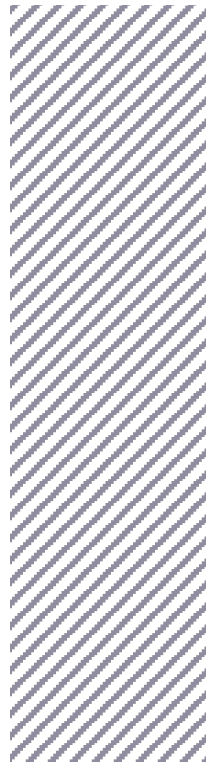
The regulatory aspects related to the circular economy are still relatively young when it comes to our sector. Only a year ago, the EU policy makers began to assess what a circular economy for textiles should look like, and it will take some time to transform the industry into a circular one. The Policy Hub supports such EU's intentions, with the expectation that an effective regulatory framework will be created for our sector. We aim to contribute to the development of such a framework by bringing the relevant expertise from our partners and participant organisations and building a unified and ambitious voice from the apparel and footwear sector.

In 2019, we kicked off our work with the launch of our first position paper, 'Building Blocks for Circular Economy in the Apparel and Footwear Industry', where we discussed what is needed to accelerate circularity in our sector. Within this, we explained the potential to leverage existing sustainability initiatives of our sector (e.g., Higg Index Tools, the Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action (UNFCCC), etc.) and highlighted a need for an inclusive set of policies that tackle environmental issues across the entire textiles supply chain. We also looked into ways to unlock the creation of economic value through circularity and encouraged the EU to address the topic of consumer-facing communication, which is key to enabling sustainable purchasing choices.

Explore the full [report](#) for more information regarding our recommendations.

*"I am very thrilled to experience the growing interest from especially EU policymakers to learn more about our industry's sustainability impact and how we can join forces to accelerate the industry's transition to a circular economy at a much higher pace than has been the case to date. We need bold policy frameworks and we are keen to use our broad reach to mobilise the industry and address gaps and opportunities in the policy field to further activate ongoing efforts."*

**Jonas Eder-Hansen**, Public Affairs Director at Global Fashion Agenda



# Strengthening Resilience in Light of the COVID-19 Crisis

The Policy Hub believes that, despite the social and economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the recovery from this crisis can be used as an opportunity to build back better - creating a more resilient and equitable economy and stronger textile supply chains.

The COVID-19 pandemic shocked the world and the global economy. The apparel and footwear industry was one of the hardest hit during this crisis, particularly with retail closures, a tremendous decrease in retail sales, and the extreme pile-up of stock. Not to mention the disastrous consequences COVID-19 brought to workers across the entire textiles supply chain, who have faced not only severe health risks but also economic and social disruptions that have threatened their livelihoods.

In light of these events, the Policy Hub expressed its support for the EU

Commission's 2020 recovery plan that aims to tackle the hardship caused by the pandemic. Building on the European Commission's (EC) Proposal, we suggested that EU Member States and Members of European Parliament should consider seven key principles when detailing and implementing the EU Recovery Plan, to ensure economic recovery while advancing the development towards a circular economy. The seven key principles were defined with a twofold ambition of short and long-term instruments balancing direct financial support, incentive-based policy instruments, and legislation. Our proposal was developed in cooperation with civil society organisations, such as Amfori, European Environmental Bureau (EEB), and The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

For more information see our [Proposal](#) for an EU Green Recovery Plan in the Textile, Apparel, and Footwear Industry.

## Our Recommendations

*Short-term measures: Next 12 months*

1. *Leveraging short-term government support to foster green engagement and commitments.*
2. *Providing tailored support for companies linked to the circular economy, especially for SMEs.*
3. *Encouraging a shift in demand towards greener choices and circularity.*

*Medium- to long-term measures: Up to five years*

4. Supporting innovative low-carbon activities.
5. Accelerating circularity by helping to scale up technologies and setting up infrastructure for collection, sorting, reuse, and high-value recycling.
6. Promoting circular design and a more sustainable material mix.
7. Incentivising increased transparency to accelerate the transition to circularity and to empower consumers.



# Design for Circularity

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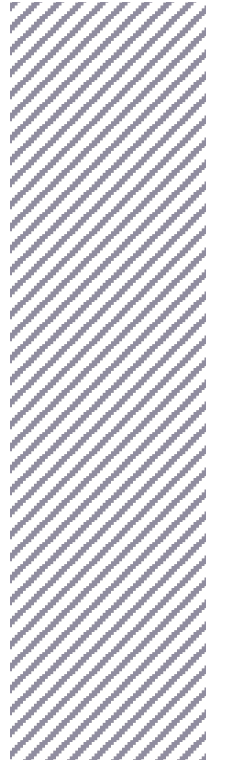
The Policy Hub supports circular design for the apparel and footwear industry and shares its vision on how to include circular economy principles at the design stage of product development.

Design is critical in accelerating the circular economy as it determines a product's performance, compliance, safety aspects, and duration, and can have positive knock-on effects at each stage of a product's development and lifecycle. Particularly, designing for circularity can expand a product's lifecycle by allowing a better material choice, encouraging its care and repair, and creating greater opportunities for re-wear, reuse, and recycling. This in return can deliver great environmental benefits such as limiting the use of natural resources, reducing carbon emissions, and preventing resources from going to landfill.

In 2020, the Policy Hub shared its first vision on the design principles to be applied to the apparel and footwear industry to further enable design for circularity in the sector. In our [position paper](#), we encouraged the design of more sustainable production, duration of service, reparability, cyclability, and holistic impact sharing the best ways and practices to achieve this. Read our recommendations in the position paper on design. In 2021, we will further expand the vision on circular design principles to propose even more ambitious design requirements.

The apparel and footwear industry has already been working on many different solutions to design out waste from their production pipeline, which have been found to reduce by roughly 10% the climate impact of a typical garment life cycle (Roos et al. 2019). Going forward, the industry aims to work closely with policy makers to ensure that these initiatives become common practice in the whole sector.

Therefore, the Policy Hub is active in current EU discussions on the Sustainable Product Initiative (SPI) which aims to stimulate circular design and promote sustainable products on the European market. To provide recommendations on how to best leverage this policy instrument in our sector, we will be launching a position paper on SPI soon.





# Leading the Discussions on EPR and Waste

The Policy Hub promotes sustainable textiles and textile waste management and supports the EU's plans to increase the collection of textiles.

In a circular system, waste is a resource and should recirculate into the market. To close the loop for the apparel and footwear sector, an effective collection system for used textiles must be set in place to ensure that material value is recovered. This will require the development of effective infrastructure connecting secondary raw materials with the production cycles.

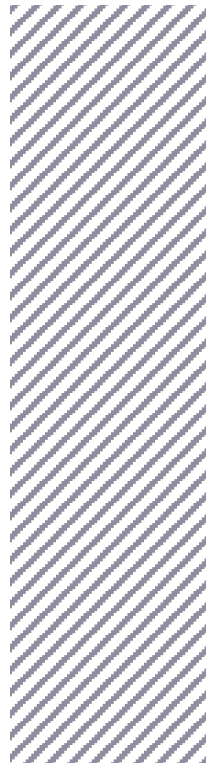
Waste is also a prominent topic in European policy discussions. We welcomed the European Commission's efforts to address textile waste by introducing mandatory collection systems

in the EU's Member States by 2025. We support the EC's plans to use the extended producer responsibility (EPR) as a regulatory tool to deal with the increased amount of textiles waste.

In the last year, we actively engaged in an open dialogue with policy makers to jointly shape a common framework for an effective EPR system for our sector. To provide valuable input, we organised three workshops on EPR gathering experts from recycling, reuse, manufacturing, waste management, municipalities, brands, and fibre producers such as Bureau of International Recycling (BIR), Circle Economy, European Apparel, and Textile Confederation (EURATEX), European Recycling Industries Confederation (EuRIC), European Federation for Waste Management and Environmental Services (FEAD), Municipal Waste Europe (MWE), RREUSE, Amsterdam, Metropolitan Area, the Government of Catalonia,

the Danish Environmental Protection Agency, and the Municipality of Milan. Collectively we provided a number of recommendations for setting the right foundations for EPR and addressed some of the challenges faced by the industry, such as a lack of a harmonized EPR system and the absence of proper textile to textile recycling technology.

For more recommendations see our position paper on EPR and stay tuned for its updated version to be released in June 2021 in collaboration with the EPR workshop participants. We are also in the process of developing a position paper on 'Waste Infrastructure and Secondary Raw Materials Market' which will further discuss how to ensure that textile waste becomes a resource. This position will be published in June 2021.



# Focussing on Transparency

The Policy Hub advocates for a common EU-level approach to communicating environmental information and protecting consumers against greenwashing and misleading information.

The journey to circularity requires active involvement of consumers in making sustainable purchasing choices and participating in closing the loop through repairing, recycling, and reusing a product. To make sustainable decisions they must have access to reliable comparable and verifiable information, which is still a challenge with the existing proliferation of methods to measure environmental impacts and of environmental labels and claims. The Policy Hub works actively to address this issue within the apparel and footwear industry.

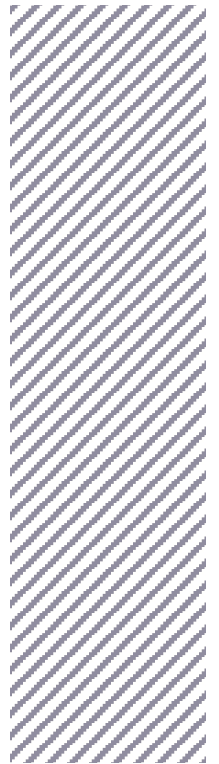
We embraced the EU's plans to establish a strong and coherent product policy framework and empower consumers through its proposals on Substantiating green claims initiative and Empowering the consumer for the green transition initiative. Following consultations with the industry, civil society,

and relevant expert stakeholders, we recently published our position paper on Transparency highlighting what policy measures are needed to tackle misleading claims and ensure reliable information for the consumers within the textiles sector.

Also, our partner organisation the SAC is involved in the facilitation of an EU Commission lead process aimed at developing EU Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules (PEFCR) for apparel and footwear, which are relevant to the transparency discussion as they could be used for calculating the Environmental Footprint profile for textile products in the future. The Policy Hub does not participate in the discussions on product environmental footprint (PEF). We only observe them as this work will have an impact on the entire apparel and footwear industry once the PEFCRs are created. At the same time, in support of the idea of having a common methodology for calculating PEF, we build on the outcomes of this joint effort from the industry, governments, and civil society, and refer to PEF when appropriate in our positions.

*"The industry has spent many years developing effective tools and processes for capturing sustainability performance in the apparel and footwear industry. Now the time has come to accelerate the delivery of a sustainable and circular model with ambitious legislation. Through the collaborative engagement of the Policy Hub partners, we are able to provide policymakers with robust frameworks and workable recommendations, such as those seen in our recent transparency position paper related to upcoming EU regulations concerning green claims and consumer-facing information. Building on the work that has been done, informed with insights from the industry, we look forward to seeing progressive policies which will lead the industry to give back more than it takes, to the people and the planet."*

**Andrew Martin**, Vice President,  
Membership and Stakeholder  
Engagement at Sustainable Apparel  
Coalition



# .07 Educating the Industry and the Policy makers

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## **The Policy Hub is a knowledge partner to both policy makers and the industry.**

We educate policy makers about the apparel and footwear supply chains and the current challenges that the industry faces when it comes to sustainability. To effectively regulate textiles, the policy makers must understand the complexities and specificities of this industry. Yet sometimes they lack the relevant technical knowledge related to circularity and apparel. In such cases, we try to fill this gap by providing deeper insights into the work of textiles manufacturers and value chains and answering any questions the policy makers have.

At the same time, we inform the apparel and footwear industry about the upcoming legislative initiatives related to circularity. We often host 'knowledge webinars' to educate our participant organisations on some of the key policy topics addressing their importance and added value for our sector. In 2021, we organised webinars on the EPR, Product Environmental Footprint, Ecodesign, and Digital Product Passport with more knowledge webinars to come! Over 100 participants joined us to learn more about the policy initiatives and they remarked that the webinars helped to inform their business practices.

*"The Policy Hub does invaluable work in aligning businesses around ambitious sustainability goals, outlining policy needs to achieve this and presenting this to policy makers. The Policy Hub's work not only helps create a progressive policy agenda, but also a coherent roadmap for how governments can achieve their sustainability objectives with the help of businesses."*

**Matthew Guenther**, Director Environmental Sustainability at TAL Apparel



# .08 Facilitating Policy Discussions

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**The Policy Hub facilitates the discussions on policies between the policy makers, civil society, and the textile industry representatives by providing a platform to exchange.**

We engage in a consistent dialogue with these stakeholders to jointly drive forward a circular economy agenda in the apparel and footwear sector. To transform the industry, we need a systemic change that requires broad participation of different actors. Therefore, we enthusiastically collaborate with civil society organizations, NGOs, and other relevant stakeholders to exchange knowledge and drive change together.

As part of our cooperation efforts, we often organise and participate in policy events and workshops to connect with like-minded organisations and share a common

vision of a circular system.

We are an active participant in GFA's Copenhagen Fashion Summit, leading business event on sustainability in fashion for over a decade, and CFS+ its digital edition delivering engaging and inspiring content through a new digital platform. This year, we have further partnered with GFA and co-hosted the "Fashion CEO Agenda Policy Gaps and Opportunities event". Overall, more than 500 people joined the event focusing on the most pressing issues and the biggest opportunities for environmental and social impact identified in GFA's Fashion CEO Agenda 2021: Respectful and Secure Work Environments, Better Wage Systems, Circular Systems, Efficient Use of Resources and Smart Material Choice.

The Policy Hub also joined the European Circular Economy

Stakeholder Platform (ECESP), which brings together stakeholders active in the broad field of the circular economy in Europe. Collectively, we will be organising policy events on different topics, such as sustainable design, efficient policy frameworks, and EPR.

# .09 Cooperating with Civil Society

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**The Policy Hub is committed to creating a new and meaningful dialogue among all actors of the textile industry, including civil society organisations with whom we actively engage.**

Civil Society Organisations such as WWF, Solidaridad, and the World Resources Institute (WRI) directly feed into our work as participating organisations. Whereas we frequently invite other relevant CSOs to review our position papers and provide their input. We value these cooperative efforts and try to build lasting relationships. In 2020, we joined forces with the Fair Trade Advocacy Office and the Shadow Textile Strategy participants to send a letter to the European Commission that welcomed the upcoming Textiles Strategy and offered our cooperation.

We were pleased to receive a reply from the Cabinet of the President of the Commission, and we hope to continue cooperating with the civil society and policy makers.

*"Solidaridad is actively contributing to the work of the Policy Hub as we feel it is one of the most important multi-stakeholder initiatives with regards to policy influencing in the garment and textile sector in Europe. Joining forces with brands, manufacturers, NGO's, and other stakeholders to create a strong voice on how we want to change the sector and what policies are needed, is key to our work and what can make real impact. The complexity of the (issues in the) sector means we need to collaborate, and the Policy Hub is providing the perfect platform for that."*

**Tamar Hoek**, Senior Policy Advisor  
Sustainable Fashion at Solidaridad

*"We see opportunities for policies and targets in the apparel sector and Policy Hub is providing a platform for stakeholders in industry to follow, discuss, and inform emerging policy dialogues."*

**Deborah Drew**, Social Impact Lead, Center for Sustainable Business at World Resources Institute

*"At the Fair Trade Advocacy Office we are always excited to have the opportunity to establish a purposeful collaboration with other organizations, including civil society, private sector actors, academics, and public sector. In our work to promote fair and sustainable textile chains we consider Policy Hub to be a trusted partner with whom to discuss the challenges, opportunities and obstacles that we face from different perspectives."*

*We are glad that Policy Hub has always been eager to exploit the common ground to launch initiatives, such as a joint letter to the European Commission; and also a good interlocutor to understand divergent views and explore ways to keep on advancing towards the common objective of a fair and sustainable textile industry."*

**Jorge Conesa**, Project Coordinator at Fair Trade Advocacy Office



# .10 Growing an Engaged Community

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**In the last two years, we saw increasing engagement of our participant organisations in the policy discussions.**

More and more stakeholders within the apparel and footwear industry see the value of sustainability and seek to transform their businesses into circular ones. As Policy Hub, we bring their progressive voices and work together to move the circularity agenda forward and find solutions to address the existing policy gaps. Prior to the COVID-19, we hosted in-person global meetings for Policy Hub's participant organisations which provided a platform to exchange ideas, share best practices, and build a unified voice on sustainability-related policies.

We hope to resume these meetings soon and, in the meantime, we actively engage with our community online by the means of monthly and topic-specific policy calls.

*"At Inditex, we believe that the drive for circularity should be a joint effort among all players, from participants in the industry to policymakers. Working collaboratively is key to support the right production of sustainable products and leverage reuse and recycling of clothing and footwear to generate a secondary raw materials market at scale. At Inditex, we share our vision and experience with the Policy Hub to drive the circular economy for everyone and join forces to speak from the experience."*

**Javier Losada Montero**, Chief Sustainability Officer at Inditex

*The Policy Hub has created the much-needed platform for brands to seek common ground on topics such as consumer communication, waste, sustainable products. C&A has been engaged in the Policy hub from the very beginning with the strong believe that once again collaboration helps to create a robust policy agenda to share our sustainability learnings with policy makers and stakeholders.'*

**Galina Parmenter**, Senior Manager - Policy & Transparency, Global Sustainability at C&A

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## Voices of Our Participant Organisations

*"The Policy Hub is doing an almost impossible job: orchestrating a process to figure out on what baseline we as an industry could collectively agree in terms of all relevant sustainability standards. And communicate those on our behalf in the discussions with the EU plans to define the future framework for our industry. What starts to emerge from the incredible patience they put in this task is for everybody involved a first glimpse of the level playing field that we will see coming in the coming years. But their valuable work is providing another key service to all of us that cannot be underestimated: ensuring through their regular exchange with the EU policy makers that the plans towards a circular textile industry can be walked in an efficient and pragmatic way. I can't wait to see the results of all that work becoming our new reality."*

**Dr. Rüdiger Fox**, CEO at Sympatex

*"A key objective for Zalando is to make fashion more sustainable and circular. Policy plays a key role in enabling change. Through our involvement in the Policy Hub, we have the opportunity to help shape the future of our sector."*

**Clémence Hermann**, Senior Manager Public Affairs and Sustainability at Zalando

*"Engaging with the Policy Hub has enabled the European Outdoor Group, an organisation with limited resources and policy expertise, to approach policy in a structured and coordinated manner. While providing us with a platform to contribute to consultations and position papers on behalf of the whole outdoor sector, we have also found it helpful as a forum to increase our understanding of the policy making processes giving us a more comprehensive understanding of an area we previously felt difficult to navigate."*

**Katy Stevens**, Head of CSR and Sustainability at European Outdoor Group.



# .11 What's Next?

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The policy makers and the industry are still at the beginning of the sustainability journey, which requires effort, and it will take time until the apparel and footwear industry is fully transformed into a circular one. Yet we are committed to this transformation and will continue working on all upcoming EU policies related to circularity and sustainability in our sector.

We are delighted to share that in 2021, we will be publishing position papers on:

- Product Design: Proposing recommendations to the Sustainable Product Initiative.
- Waste: Proposing recommendations to EU's waste initiatives as listed in the Circular Economy Action Plan.
- EPR: Proposing recommendations on how to create an effective harmonised EPR scheme across the EU.
- EU Recovery Plan: Updating our previous recommendations on the EU COVID-19 Recovery Plan.

We will also work on the current policies on the EU's political agenda related to decarbonisation, sustainable investment, and social aspects, and will participate in the consultation on the EU Textile Strategy. Meanwhile, we will continue to facilitate policy discussions and host educational sessions to convene and guide the industry.

We look forward to supporting the policy makers in their plans and building a policy framework that will drive a more circular apparel and footwear industry.

For more information on our work, follow us on LinkedIn and visit our website at [www.policyhub.org](http://www.policyhub.org).



# .12 FAQ

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## 1. Who can join the Policy Hub?

Every member of our partner organisations (the SAC, GFA, FESI, Textile Exchange, the ZDHC Foundation) automatically becomes a participating organisation of the Policy Hub. Thus, in order to join us, an organisation first has to become a member of one of our partners.

## 2. Who is funding the Policy Hub?

The Policy Hub is funded by Laudes Foundation and by the contributions of our partner organisations.

## 3. How do you ensure a progressive voice in the apparel and footwear industry?

Our vision is an ambitious policy framework that accelerates circularity and having a progressive voice of the industry is a must to realise this vision. Thus, each of our position papers undergoes a review mechanism to ensure a vision alignment. Our review mechanism uses a traffic light system to reflect on the envisioned impact of

the policy propositions we make and it prohibits advocating for policies that would undermine the vision and mission of the Policy Hub.

## 4. Brands are on different stages of their circularity journey. How do you accommodate all of them in the discussions?

We learn from the industry leaders about the best practices when it comes to circularity and share this knowledge with others through our forum. At the same time, brands who are at an early stage of their circularity journey inform us about the challenges they face. This provides us with an opportunity to make informed recommendations on policies which encapsulate the ambitions of the leaders yet are realistic and attainable for the SMEs and other brands at the beginning of their circularity journey. Reflecting on the needs of different brands is key to forming effective policies which bring the change we need by creating an even level playing field.

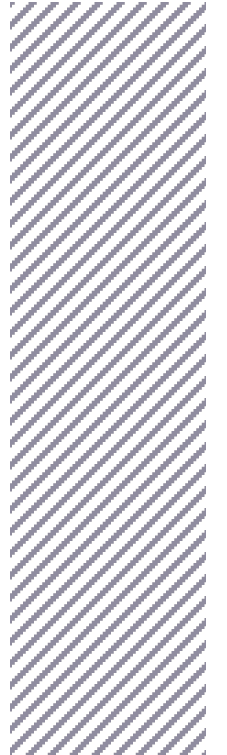
## 5. How does the Policy Hub engage with civil society organisations (CSOs)?

Some civil society organisations, such as WWF, WRI, and Solidaridad are the participant organisations of Policy Hub and directly feed into our work.

On top of this we invite other CSOs to review our positions before publishing them to assess if they perceive our positions as ambitious. This feedback mechanism reflects the Policy Hub's inclusive approach. We also work with CSOs on various policy topics to collectively advocate for better policies, e.g., we sent a joint letter with many of the Shadow Textile Strategy Participants to the Commission concerning the upcoming EU Textiles Strategy.

## 6. How can I engage with the Policy Hub?

Visit [www.policyhub.org](http://www.policyhub.org) to learn more and reach out via the form at [www.policyhub.org/contact](http://www.policyhub.org/contact) to engage further.



# Annex

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## Publications

- [Building blocks for a sustainable circular economy for textiles and footwear](#)
- [A common framework for EPR in the apparel and footwear industry](#)
- [Better design for greater circularity](#)
- [Proposal for an EU Green Recovery Plan in the Textile, Apparel and Footwear Industry](#)
- [Accelerating Transparency for Apparel & Footwear](#)

## In the Media

- [Business of Fashion \(June 2021\) "The Sustainability Regulations That Could Reshape the Fashion Industry"](#)
- [May 2019: Sustainable Apparel Coalition launches Policy Hub to Accelerate the Circular Economy Policy Agenda](#)
- [Ecotextile News \(May 2019\): "SAC Policy Hub seeks circular economy growth"](#)
- [Just Style \(May 2019\): "Industry-wide push for EU circular policy change"](#)
- [Ecotextile News \(December 2019\): "Combined call for circular clothing economy"](#)
- [Just Style \(December 2019\): "Proposals for EU policymakers for circular clothing"](#)
- [Fashion United \(December 2019\): "What does the EU's Green Deal mean for the Textile Industry?"](#)
- [Vogue Business \(16 April 2020\): "The flawed ways brands talk about sustainability"](#)
- [Ecotextile News \(17 June 2020\): "Policy Hub presents green recovery plan"](#)
- [Fashion Unites \(18 June 2020\): Apparel and footwear industry proposes green recovery plan for Europe](#)
- [Sourcing Journal \(29 June 2020\): "Green Recovery Roadmap for EU's Fashion Sector Banks on Circular Future"](#)
- [WWF \(June 2020\): "WWF backs textile and apparel industry's proposals for a greener recovery in Europe"](#)

