

Sustainability and circularity in the textile value chain

Sustainable Recovery through Sustainable Fashion Nexus Dialogue

7 September 2021

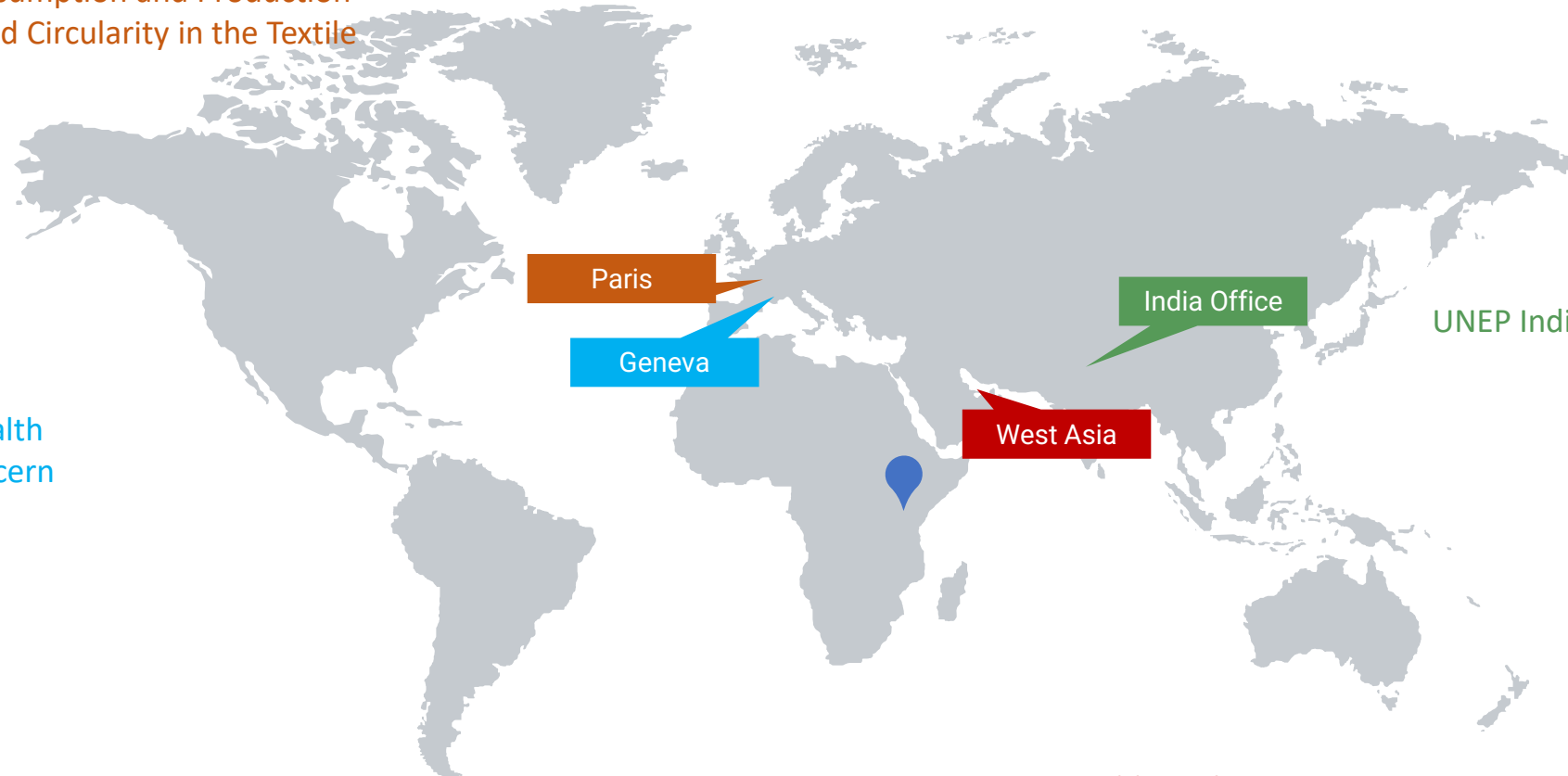
Bettina Heller

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United Nations Environment Programme

UNEP Offices working on fashion

Sustainable Consumption and Production
Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile
Value Chain



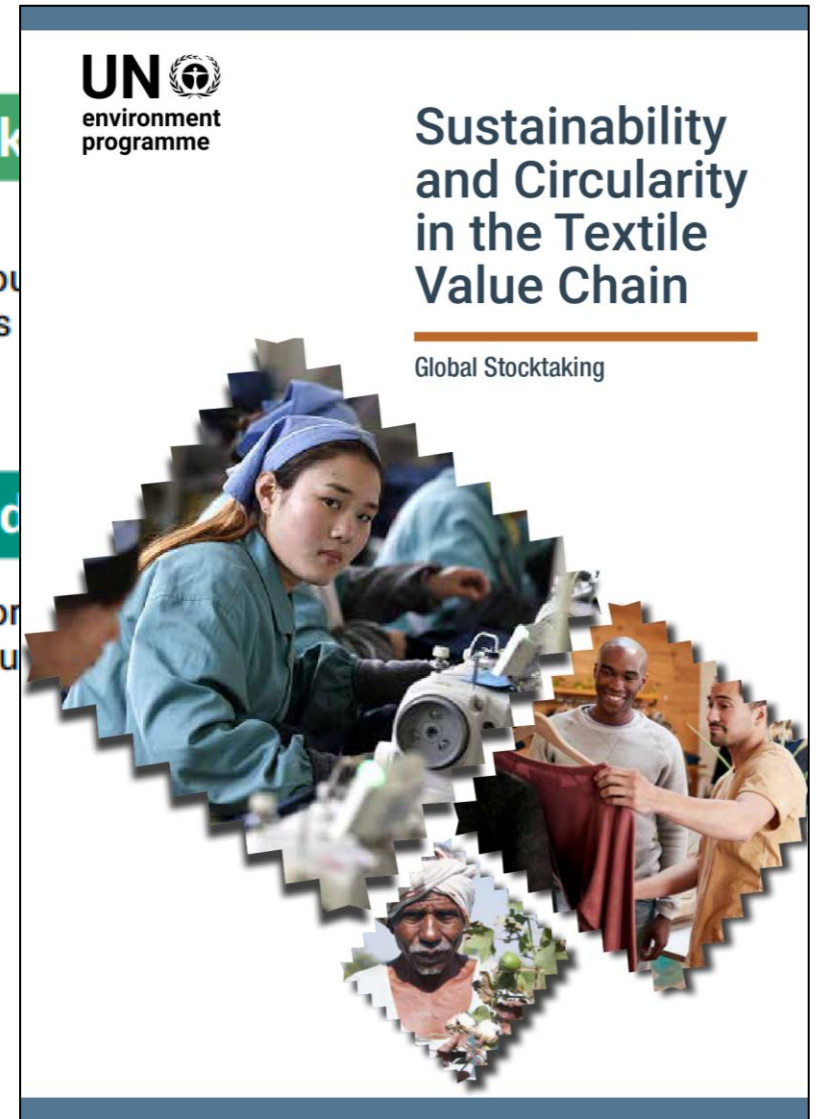
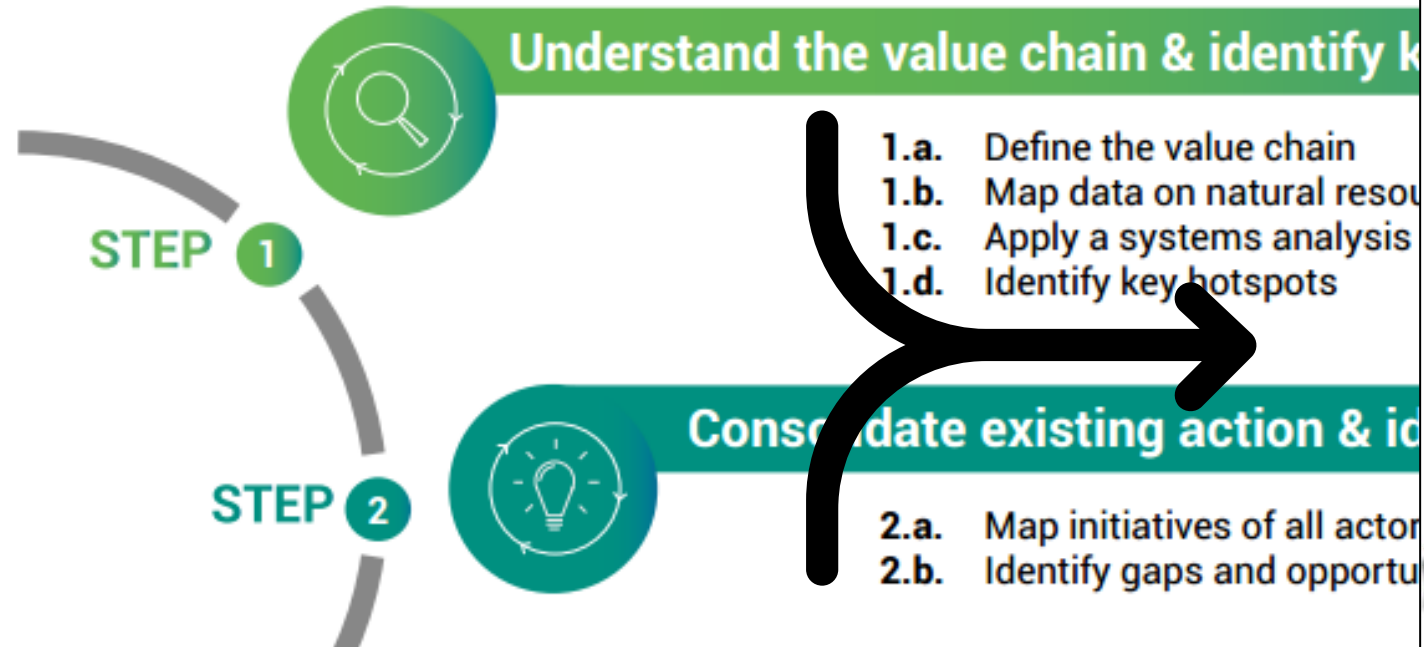
UNEP India Sustainable Textiles Initiatives

Pollution and Health
Chemicals of concern

West Asia Sustainable Fashion Programme

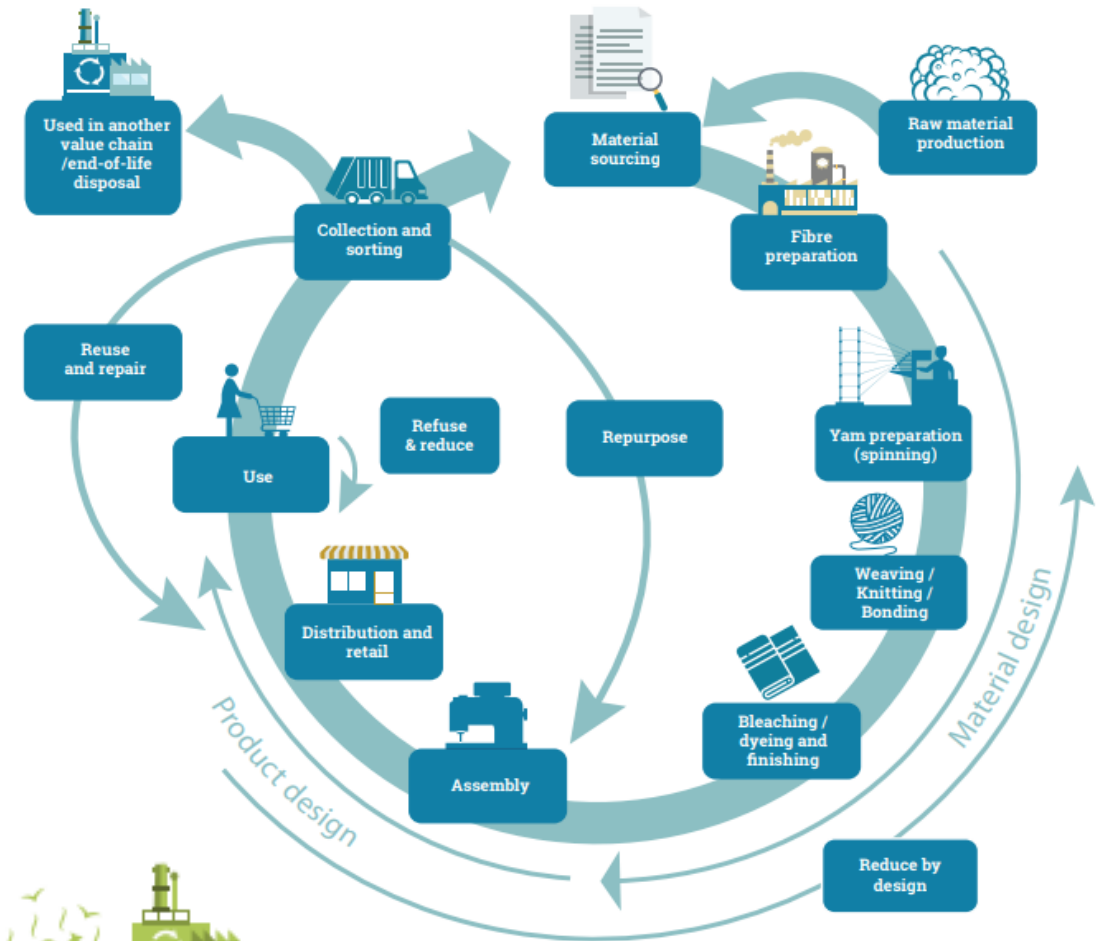
 Headquarters (Nairobi, Kenya)

UNEP's value chain approach



Textile value chain

- Comprises actors and stakeholders
- Often represented as linear albeit possible loops
- Aspiration to shift to **circular system** while keeping materials at highest possible value



Environmental hotspots



Cotton cultivation

- fertiliser, herbicides, pesticides
- land use (biodiversity & habitat loss)
- high water usage

Wet finishing process

- coal-based energy
- chemicals & water pollution

End-of-life

impact relatively low, but significant resource and economic loss (only 13% recycled)

→ loss of potential to decrease impacts across all stages

Synthetic fibre

- fossil fuel

Washing & drying

- electricity
- water
- detergent
- microfibres



Key needs and priority actions

1

Stronger governance & policies



- Provide **education, skills and support for scaling of circular and sustainable business models** and **sustainable solutions** and **technologies** (e.g. through new or strengthened collaboration platforms); **leverage funding** from financial institutions; provide **spaces for government collaboration**

2

Collaboration & finance



- **Incentivize new innovative business models** that increase textile utilization and reduce consumption (e.g. fiscal policy, sustainable public procurement, regulations); *implement eco-design requirements and production standards to **level the playing field***; enable an **inclusive and just transition**

3

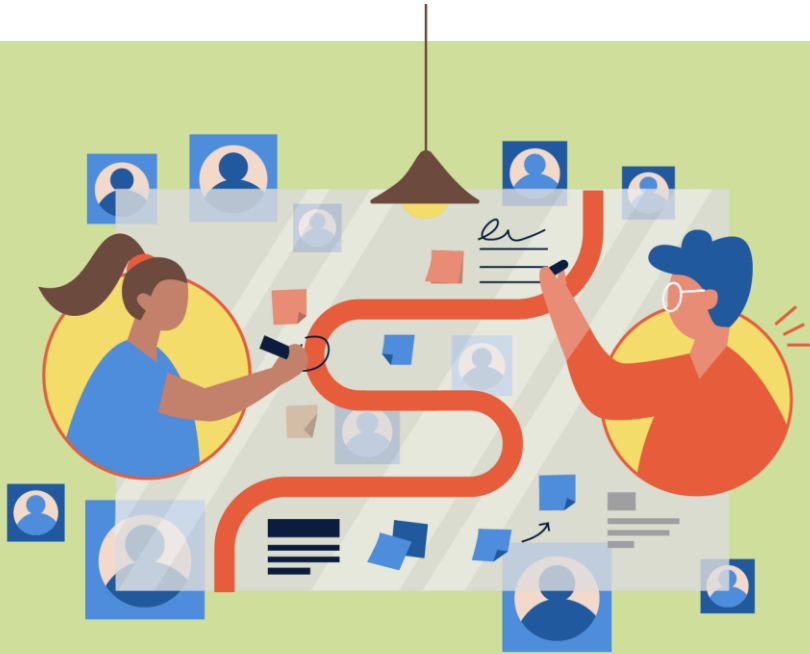
Changes in consumption habits



- **Change consumer attitudes** through campaigns (e.g. using social media influencers & UN ambassadors), **improve advertising and consumer information tools** such as labels; **build acceptance for product longevity that reduces consumption**; instill habits to reduce climate impacts of **garment care**

Need for real accountability across the value chain (e.g. through due diligence, transparency & traceability efforts, collective programmes)

Upcoming work at global level



Roadmap to sustainability and circularity in the textile value chain

Following consultation workshops in May, our roadmap report is about to undergo peer review and will be launched by the **end of 2021**

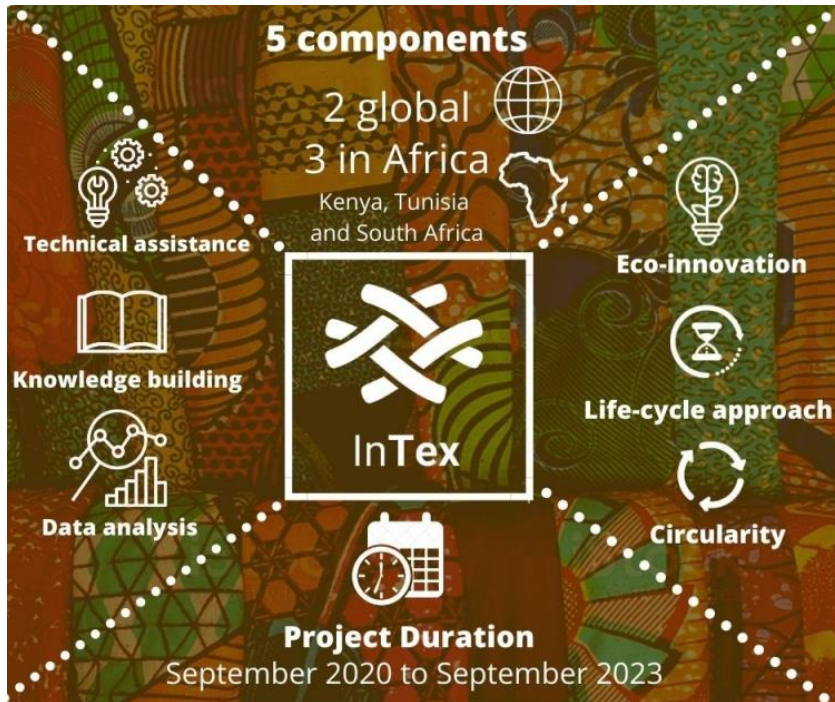


Sustainable Fashion Communications Strategy

The strategy is under development and is focusing on the role of consumer-facing storytellers and the power of shifting the narrative to strengthen demand for a positive fashion future.

Intex Project

(September 2020 – August 2023)



- Provides support to governments and SMEs in Kenya, South Africa and Tunisia, to implement a more sustainable business model (eco-innovation) and assess their product environment footprints
- Assessments on the potential of sustainable economic models to support the transition to SCP in the textile value chain, in support of the implementation of the UNEA-4 resolution on SCP
- **Increase among SMEs and governments the knowledge on resource efficiency, life cycle thinking, circularity and eco-innovation in the textile value chain**

Visit the project website for more info:

www.unep.org/intex

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libera.assini@un.org

Building Circularity in the Textile Value Chain

Learn about the work of UNEP and its partners in this area, and get engaged.

1 August 2019

Share

Learn about the work of UNEP and its partners in this area, and get engaged.



Photo by Photos

Check out our Website!

<https://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/unesp-textile-value-chain>

Visit the UNEP Circularity Platform:
<https://buildingcircularity.org/textiles/>

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