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Sustainability at the spotlight of the Global Fashion Summit 2025

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As EU legislation on textiles comes into force, fashion leaders and EU policy-makers meet at the Global Fashion Summit 2025 to explore the balancing between business and sustainability for one of the most resource-intensive sectors of the global economy.

by Eirini Polydorou

Opening in one week, the panels of the Global Fashion Summit 2025 explore aspects of sustainability with discussions on themes such as: bio-desing, technology and the future of fibres, jobs with dignity and gender equality, eco-efficiency in the use of freshwater in the supply chain of textiles and the digital revolution of re-sale innovative business models.

The organisation includes match-making events, ignite presentations and leadership roundtables presenting best practices such as bridging Bangladesh's path to circularity in collaboration with UNIDO on traceable recycling of post-industrial textiles' waste, or an executive-level dialogue on corporate financial management to drive decarbonization.

Last year's edition of the Summit, themed "Unlocking the Next Level", stressed the need to strengthen collaboration towards the sustainability shift in fashion, the fourth highest pressure-sector on the environment in the EU.

Building on last year's work, this year's edition titled "Barriers and Bridges" appears to be designed towards a more policy-oriented perspective, in light of the recent and ongoing entry into force of new EU legislation in the context of the Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAC).

Regulation is therefore included in the key pillars of the event's

programme for the transformation towards a sustainable yet competitive fashion industry, along with innovation, capital, courage and incentives.

For instance, textiles' producers will have to specifically clarify that "this T-shirt is made out of 5 recycled plastic bottles", instead of the current practice of using general green labels such as "green" or "eco-friendly", which are about to be banned, according to the new Green Claims directive, if applied by 2027 as planned.

High-level EU policy-makers participate in the Summit, including Jessika Roswall, Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy, Members of the European Parliament and representatives from the European Environment Agency.

Speakers also include top management representatives from a wide-range of the industry including luxury brands and fast-fashion businesses, of the heaviest environmental impact among textiles companies.

Leading organisations from retailing to marketing and across the supply chain of textiles also participate, along with academics, researchers, journalists and members of the civil society.

The event is organised by Global Fashion Agenda in Copenhagen on 3-5 June 2025.

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