

**COPENHAGEN
FASHION
WEEK**

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STATUS ON 2020

Annual Sustainability Report

INTRODUCTION

A reflection on 2020

Our first annual Sustainability Report documents Copenhagen Fashion Week's sustainability efforts in 2020 and reflects the targets of our 2020–2022 Sustainability Action Plan which was launched in January 2020. It showcases our commitments, our challenges and our ambitions to create change.

In all aspects 2020 was an extraordinarily eventful and challenging year for everyone as it unleashed unpredictability, unprecedented changes and a new normal on the world.

The fashion industry, with its complex global supply chains, had to adapt to a rapidly changing year. Most companies faced lockdown measures that resulted in store closures, order cancellations and employees being let go – locally and along the value chain. More than ever, we had to face the effects our industry and its systems have on the environment, human safety and wellbeing globally.

This economic instability in the fashion industry brought fundamental issues such as outdated wholesale models and the shortcomings of fashion's seasonality to the surface. This, we believe, underlines the urge for new ways of conducting business in a fashion industry that has shown the need to become more resilient.

The fragility of our climate today – and fashion's part in its destruction – were highlighted as wildfires swept across parts of the USA, the Amazon and Australia. While the climate is already a topic many companies have engaged with in some form or another in recent years, 2020 became a year that unequivocally made it clear exactly how desperately we need to create change.

Fortunately 2020 also gave us a much-needed focus on social issues and injustice. Locally, the Me Too

movement resurged in Denmark, fostering a persistent dialogue about a culture of sexism and inequality. Worldwide, the Black Lives Matter movement created an international conversation and sparked protests about systemic racism across the globe. The fight for equality and against injustice is far from finished. We are only at the beginning of fundamentally addressing much-overlooked issues and understanding what it takes to dismantle racism, fight sexism and connect our local topics to the global socio-environmental injustice this industry is part of upholding.

Reflecting on this last year, Copenhagen Fashion Week is committed to pushing forward with our strategy and our three-year targets. As a fashion week, we understand our position in the industry as a social, cultural and economic platform. Our purpose is to gather industry actors around new ideas and to craft a vision, but also create a space to generate economic transactions. As a result brands centre their calendars, and therefore their business operations, around fashion weeks. In this unique position, we have the responsibility and opportunity to influence, inspire and help lead fashion companies to more sustainable ways of operating. We decided to be not just a voice, but to also take action, when we released our three-year strategy. We made a commitment to use our platform to create lasting positive change within our industry.

Striving for sustainability is increasingly important, and in the face of a challenging year, it is paramount that we stay on course.

This report is important to us as it gives us the opportunity to reflect on the past year, fulfils our ambition to be transparent and creates a possibility for knowledge sharing and conversations.

Report structure

To stay accountable on our journey and to fulfil our due diligence, we are issuing this document to openly report on the Year 1 targets of our 2020–2022 Sustainability Action Plan. Although unable to meet every one of the goals we set, we excelled in most areas.

The report is divided into four sections to reflect the structure of our 2020–2022 Sustainability Action Plan: Reducing Climate Impact; Reducing Resource Consumption and Waste Creation; Innovating through Partnerships and Governance; and Accelerating the Industry's Transition to Sustainable Business Practices. The first three sections relate to the event production of fashion week itself, while the last section focuses on our ability and the opportunities available to create positive change in the industry.

The report describes our successes and challenges but also discusses the barriers we faced and how we are aiming to overcome them to progress further.

Unexpected changes

Due to the impact of COVID-19, we prioritised the most effective goals of our Year 1 strategy. Like the rest of the industry, Copenhagen Fashion Week had to reallocate resources to tackle the crisis and had to digitise to adapt. We changed our format in August to a hybrid platform of talks, shows and presentations to ensure safety, whilst being accessible and inclusive to brands and spectators aboard. While this has taken much of our focus, we managed to reach many of our goals. But a few goals, such as developing a code of conduct for our partners, were postponed – either for strategic reasons or as a result of available resources in 2020 – until 2021.

While we realise the shortcomings of not reaching all targets, we are proud of our progress and achievements, such as our point system methodology for our 2023 Sustainability Requirements and exciting new partnerships. The following section describes our journey in further detail.

Reducing climate impact

2020 status and future actions

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

"Reducing climate impact" addresses SDG 13: Climate action.

Our main objective for reducing our climate impact is to reduce our global greenhouse gas emissions. The fashion industry is a huge emitter of CO2 and we need to address this through our activities and the actions we influence.

At Copenhagen Fashion Week we have collaborated with Climaider, a certified gold standard carbon offset provider, to continue measuring, reducing and counteracting our CO2 emissions. Our fashion week operations in August 2020 emitted 22.38 tonnes of CO2, representing a 50% decrease in our baseline of 45 tonnes of CO2 (measured at the August 2019 edition of fashion week). Like most others, our emissions naturally went down in 2020 due to low international travel, as well as both fewer and smaller physical events. In other words, once the pandemic is over, we will remain committed to reducing our impact as it is likely to rise again compared to August 2020.

One target was to offset all shows by introducing a climate fee for brands that presented at Copenhagen

Fashion Week. Thus, we measured CO2 emissions at a representative sample of shows in January 2020 to determine the average amount for a show. However, due to the pandemic, brands adapted their showcasing formats in August 2020, switching to films, installations, exhibitions and smaller shows. We chose not to introduce the fee as it would not be comparable to the calculations of the prior season. We are looking forward to making headway and introducing the climate fee or requiring brands to document their compensation in August 2021, when we expect a greater balance between physical and virtual content at fashion week.

Like most other businesses in 2020, we excelled at exploring new digital solutions, developing a new digital platform accompanied by a digital strategy to make sure our fashion week could be attended, whether in person or from afar. We digitally engaged with editors and buyers around the globe and had a three-day live stream of our fashion week shows, films and talks.

Reducing resource consumption and waste creation

2020 status and future actions

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

"Reducing climate impact" addresses SDG 13: Climate action.

This section addresses the waste creation and resources used in our organisation's operations during fashion week. The targets for this area also focused on how Copenhagen Fashion Week can help brands to achieve a more responsible show, from food to staging.

COVID-19 generally dictated whether our fashion week events would be conventional or digital in 2020 and we hope that in the future we will be able to create a balance between physical and digital events. As a result, we created partnerships with suppliers to help show brands put on more responsible productions. We partnered

with Plant2Plast to take advantage of its recyclable and Forest Stewardship Council-certified wood-based tableware, and Junk Buster to help show brands appropriately recycle waste from show production. All brands in our schedule received an exclusive offer through Copenhagen Fashion Week for these services.

In 2020 we also updated our Guide for a More Responsible Show to reflect new insights and to provide new inspiration for brands. This tool continues to assist them in creating shows that are less resource intensive and more responsible.

Innovating through partnerships and governance

2020 status and future actions

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

"Reducing climate impact" addresses SDG 13: Climate action.

Copenhagen Fashion Week prioritises partners who already have strategic sustainability frameworks in place, a practice we continued in 2020. A milestone was entering into a three-year strategic partnership with Zalando who in 2019 revealed their do.MORE strategy. According to Zalando, their vision is to become a sustainable fashion platform with a net-positive impact for people and the planet by reducing their environmental impact, advance the wellbeing of people as well as activate circularity and more sustainable choices. One important part of the do.MORE strategy includes a continuous focus on increasing ethical standards. By 2023 Zalando will only work with partners who align with them and to this end, they have made sustainability assessments mandatory for both its private labels and partner brands. The strategic partnership with Zalando will strive to ensure the alignment of both fashion platforms in our 2023 sustainability assessments and requirements, respectively.

We also strengthened and continued our close collaboration with the Danish industry organisations Dansk Fashion & Textile and WEAR to ensure closer alignment and coordination, and we continued our collaboration with our knowledge partner, In futurum, and our technical partner Rambøll to further our commitment to our sustainability efforts.

We initiated dialogues with the local trade fairs to strive towards a closer alignment of our sustainability goals.

The trade fair CIFF recently decided to initiate a process of adopting our 2023 Sustainability Requirements in a way that resonates with and creates value for their own platform as a fashion fair, their business model and their exhibitors and buyers. In concrete terms, it means that CIFF – as of 2023 – will require that brands comply with Copenhagen Fashion Week’s minimum standards and obtain the minimum score needed in order to exhibit at CIFF. We are very optimistic that this process will lead to even more alignment and connected efforts across industry platforms.

Fashion weeks across the world struggled with lockdowns and travel restrictions in 2020 making collaboration with other fashion weeks difficult to pursue. We all had to adapt, but greater collaboration between fashion weeks is still a high priority for us, as we believe that partnerships are a valuable tool in pursuing sustainability. We will continue our efforts to achieve this in 2021.

Accelerating the industry

2020 status and future actions

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

"Reducing climate impact" addresses SDG 13: Climate action.

Copenhagen Fashion Week acknowledges that our influence on the industry is much greater than our event's environmental impact, which is why we have an enormous responsibility and opportunity to push for change. We wish to inspire, encourage and assist in the industry's sustainable transition. The targets for Accelerating the Industry are focused on how Copenhagen Fashion Week can use its platform and influence to help create positive impact.

One of our more ambitious targets in this regard is to create minimum requirements for brands to participate in Copenhagen Fashion Week. In order for fashion brands to show at our fashion week, they will have to comply with our sustainability requirements by 2023. This is an ambitious move that we have broken down into annual targets to make it possible for us to better facilitate the process and for brands to meet them on time.

In 2020, in collaboration with Rambøll, In futurum and Dansk Fashion & Textile we reviewed the 2023 Sustainability Requirements and made a decision to add a minimum standard. As such, the 2023 Sustainability Requirements now comprise 18 minimum standards after adding the stipulation that brands must operate a safe, healthy and respectful working environment for all employees free from harassment and discrimination and where everyone enjoys equal opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity, age, political/religious/sexual orientation, and physical appearance.

We also developed a carefully weighted point system to score the sustainability efforts of brands by considering their impact and challenge level. With the assistance of Rambøll, we successfully developed an online survey for brands to fill out. However, COVID-19 and the circumstances that brands found themselves in prevented us from conducting a pilot test in autumn 2020 to create a baseline for the requirements. We postponed the survey until 20 January 2021, which is when we kicked off the pilot test with 12 representative brands in terms of size and sustainability level. The test will run until 10 February 2021. We will subsequently be able to establish a baseline score for determining the number of points brands must achieve by 2023 to attend fashion weeks.

This delay also means that the establishment of a sustainability committee to screen brands has also been postponed. We are very excited and ready to introduce our sustainability survey and point system methodology, which we believe eventually will guide brands in meeting our sustainability requirements.

Finally, this past year, we added sustainability descriptions of all show brands to our website and facilitated two seminars together with In futurum and Rambøll to introduce brands to the new sustainability requirements system.

Looking ahead

Despite a challenging year of navigating a new reality and major changes, we believe that the status of our sustainability targets proves the potential of our strategy and three-year targets. What is more, we believe it proves the potential of fashion week's role in creating sustainable change by inspiring, helping and pushing fashion companies to embrace more sustainable business practices.

The pandemic has increased the focus on shared learning, knowledge sharing and helping each other; it is our wish to harness this momentum even more in the future to foster change.

As our three-year action plan states, supporting brands in executing zero-waste show practices and pursuing partnerships with green venues are two of our 2021 targets. Our main focus, however, will be to push for wider industry adoption of our 2023 Sustainability Requirements. The trade fair CIFF has recently initiated a process to adopt the 2023 Sustainability Requirements which in itself is a milestone, but due to their tremendous potential as a suitable framework,

the aim is to roll them out more broadly in the fashion industry in Denmark and as part of other key global platforms.

In other words, we will strive to gather more industry actors together around the same sustainability vision and a similar framework and methodology for creating change.

After facing a year where combating social inequality and injustice took to the streets, our aim is to add concrete targets on racism and sexism to our three-year action plan in 2021. As such, we are in the process of updating the Danish Fashion Ethical Charter to ensure that all signatories adhere to principles relating to these matters.

Combined, our hope is that these efforts will aid in spreading the message of greater equality and sustainability, providing a steppingstone for further progress and innovative ideas in the industry based on tested, concrete guidance.

Thank you

Copenhagen Fashion Week would like to thank all the fashion brands that share our vision and that have immensely supported our sustainability journey.

We would specifically like to thank the companies that are participating in our pilot test of the 2023 Sustainability Requirements: Baum und Pferdgarten, Ganni, Gestuz, Marimekko, Mark Kenly Domino Tan, Mykke Hofmann, Rodebjer, Rotate, Remain, Saks Potts, Soulland and Stine Goya.

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A final thank you to our knowledge partner In futurum and technical partner Rambøll for helping us advance and improve our sustainability efforts.

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