WWF and Google Partner on Fashion Sustainability Platform

New data-enriched, decision-making platform will help drive responsible sourcing decisions in the fashion industry

Mountain View, CA, June 10, 2020: Google today announced a partnership with WWF Sweden to help create an environmental data platform that will enable more responsible sourcing decisions in the fashion industry. This collaboration will bring together projects from each organisation, drawing on the unique strengths of both.

Now more than ever, the fashion industry is answering the call to sustainability. The industry today accounts for 20 percent of wastewater and 2-8 percent of greenhouse gas emissions globally - potentially rising by as much as 50% by 2030. Much of this impact occurs at the raw materials stage in the production process, where supply chains can be highly fragmented, and gathering and assessing data at scale is a challenge.

The partnership announced today aims to address these needs, providing a platform that could be used on a standalone basis or as a complement to existing efforts. At the 2019 Copenhagen Fashion Summit, Google Cloud announced a pilot in collaboration with Stella McCartney to use Google Cloud technology to provide a more comprehensive view into raw materials of clothing manufacturers' supply chains. That work continues with Stella McCartney, whose team have been pivotal in shaping the concept of the platform and will continue as the first fashion brand to test it. WWF Sweden and long-term partner IKEA created a similar tool in 2018, focused on analysing the risk and impact of various textiles raw materials.

Google and WWF Sweden will now collaborate on an updated platform leveraging all of these data types, aiming to further increase the accuracy and relevance of raw materials assessments. This new platform will also move beyond cotton and viscose as first announced, to include numerous additional raw materials based on WWF data and knowledge. In addition to Stella McCartney and IKEA, WWF and Google are also in consultation with a large number of other fashion, luxury, denim, and athletic brands and retailers.

"It's our ambition to create a data-enriched decision-making platform that enables analysis of the supply chain in a way that has not been possible before at this scale," said Ian Pattison, Head of Customer Engineering, Retail, Google UK/ IE. "Partnering with WWF brings together Google Cloud's technical capacity, including big-data analysis and machine learning, and WWF's deep knowledge of assessing raw materials. Together, we can make supply chain data visible and accessible to decision makers, and drive more responsible and sustainable decisions."

"Sustainability is a challenge that crosses industry boundaries, and we firmly believe that solutions require strong partnerships and collaboration," said Kate Brandt, Google Sustainability Officer. "Our ambition is to fill fundamental data gaps by bringing greater accuracy to environmental reporting—ultimately moving toward more sustainable processes. By combining our technology, and with data inputs from many key industry brands and retailers, we believe we can significantly magnify this work together."

"WWF's partnership work with companies has always been motivated by the need to drive real transformation at the largest possible scale," said Håkan Wirtén, CEO of WWF Sweden. "This project is an excellent example of how we can take valuable work with a long term partner like IKEA, collaborate with another strong WWF partner like Google to make that work even more powerful, and make it open source so that hopefully it can help with the transformation of a whole industry."

Notes To Editors

We are already in conversation with a number of retail brand partners. If you would like to help further experiment and build out this platform, please contact us on: fashion_sustainability@google.com

Each material and sourcing location will be scored on multiple environmental issues such as water scarcity or air pollution, as well as estimating specific impacts such as greenhouse gas emissions and accounting for the 'mitigation benefits' of more sustainable sourcing options.

WWF Sweden

WWF Sweden will bring to the platform its own proprietary (and normalised public data) on risk, LCA and the strength of sustainability solutions for textiles raw materials and will support Google in selecting relevant additional datasets - as well as providing the framework for calculation and processing of each type of data to create the overall scores and mitigation actions

for each fibre and location.

For more information about WWF's work with Corporate Partners, please gohere.

This project on the fashion sustainability platform is a partnership between WWF Sweden and Google Ireland. It is linked to two broader global partnerships within WWF - the WWF and Google partnership managed by WWF US, which has been running successfully since 2014, and the WWF and IKEA partnership managed by WWF Sweden, which has been running successfully since 2002.

Google

Google will also provide access to Google Earth Engine data, which offers satellite imagery and geospatial data which can detect changes, map trends, and quantify differences on the Earth's surface. Google Cloud's artificial intelligence capabilities will allow it to unlock insights fast, filling fundamental data gaps that have prohibited action in this area in the past.

For more information about Google's sustainability work, please visit:https://sustainability.google/

Google Cloud

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