



# 102 - Climate Change Challenge WebQuests

*Sustainable Fashion*



**Building Problem-solving Skills of Youth to Address  
Environmental and Climate Change Issues**

## IO2 – Climate Change Challenge WebQuests

### WebQuest Theme: Sustainable Fashion

<b>TIME ALLOCATED:</b>	6 – 8 hours
<b>TITLE OF THE WEBQUEST:</b>	Creating your own sustainable fashion wardrobe
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	
<p>Every day, most of us dress ourselves in items churned out by what is arguably the world's second-most polluting industry. Have you ever heard about sustainable fashion? Have you ever thought about the clothes that you already own? Have you supported unethical treatment of workers? Have you unknowingly helped pollute the Earth with your shopping habits? There are so many questions. What brands or stores should you trust? And is it even good to donate your clothes to developing countries that are inundated with our donated items?</p> <p>Today's society influences us to consume at a faster rate than ever before. Thanks to mass production, we can afford to simply discard products we no longer want and replace them instantly with minimal impact on our spending. As a result, products are designed with a shorter life expectancy and the quality is lower. The fashion industry is no longer sustainable.</p> <p>Not wanting to add to the damaging effects of fast fashion, let's make changes to our purchasing habits. Alternatives do exist!</p> <p>We can find the solution in buying less and choosing better quality items that are made as ethically as possible. Let's take one step forward and try to be well informed and create new habits with sustainable fashion. Even small steps matter and we can help to fight against climate change!</p>	
<b>TASK</b>	
<p>How can one person have an impact on the global system? Do you believe in the power of small actions? With all the media attention on the negative social and environmental impacts of fast fashion, it is easy to feel that, as a consumer there is little that you can do to affect</p>	



change. Our money can have a powerful impact if we choose to invest it where our values lie. As consumers, we can give sustainable brands a reason to keep producing, or we can give fast fashion brands a reason not to change. There is so much more to having a sustainable wardrobe than just swapping our conventional fashion shopping for more sustainably minded labels, although this is a critical part. Having a sustainable wardrobe requires us to consider where we source our clothing from, how we wear and use our clothing, and what our relationship to shopping and consumerism is. It also requires us to think about what we do with our clothing once it becomes faded, frayed and in need of repair. We need to know which textiles are sustainable, why quality matters, and which shops and labels we can count on to buy our sustainable fashion from. It is possible to take care of the environment without sacrificing your sense of style and your love of fashion!

Each of us can shape the world with each of our individual actions, day-by-day. Change needs to start somewhere, and the best place for change to start is with you. Ultimately sustainable fashion is about consuming fewer items and in a smarter manner, so learning to live with a sustainable wardrobe will help to save you money in the long run.

You and some friends were out shopping one day in the city. You went shopping as you really felt you needed a new pair of jeans. On the street, you saw a group of young activists protesting. As you approached them, you saw a banner stating:

‘It takes 20,000 litres of water to make ONE PAIR of JEANS’.

This has shocked you. You have so many pairs of jeans and you were about to go and buy another! This has gotten you thinking; what is the environmental and human cost of the clothes you have in your own wardrobe? With some friends, you have decided to research the topic of sustainable fashion, to get informed about what our love of fast fashion really costs the environment and our fellow humans, and to plan how you can transform your own wardrobe into one that is kinder to the environment?

At the end of this task, you will create a plan to build your own sustainable wardrobe!

## **PROCESS**

Step 1: Do you dress sustainably? What do you already know about sustainable fashion?



You want to conduct some research and have to get as much information as you can about this topic and learn what sustainable fashion is. However, before you can start to learn about the topic, you should assess how much you already know at this point, and how sustainable your fashion habits are? Complete these following tests - answer honestly; think about yourself, how much does sustainability influence your shopping habits, and how much information about sustainable fashion do you already know? The following quizzes will help you to evaluate how much you know so far. Complete the following quizzes in your teams with a maximum time of 10 minutes.

- Sustainable Fashion Quiz: How eco-friendly is your wardrobe?:  
<https://www.igafencu.com/r/sustainable-fashion-quiz/>
- How much do you know about sustainable fashion:  
<https://www.tryinteract.com/quiz/how-much-do-you-know-about-sustainable-fashion/>
- How Eco-Friendly is Your Fashion Style? [QUIZ]:  
<https://www.goodnet.org/articles/how-ecofriendly-your-fashion-style-quiz>

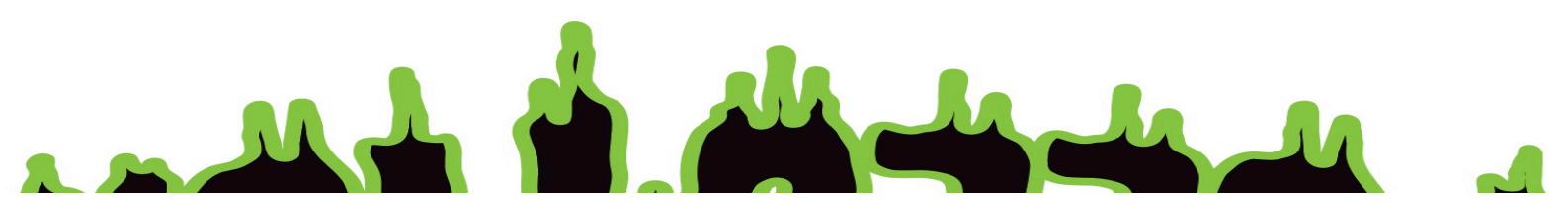
Now that you are more conscious about your wardrobe, start a discussion with your friends about how sustainable your shopping habits are. Already, you might have noticed an area where you could improve or change your habits.

In the next steps you will learn how to make your wardrobe more sustainable and you will identify what characteristics are crucial for sustainable lifestyle.

### Step 2: How to Practice Sustainable Fashion?

Sustainable fashion is about the environmental impact of the clothes we purchase, wear and dispose of.

Put simply, the clothes you wear matter. All clothing is handmade, yet most people have never thought about what the fabric in their favourite jumper is made of, or who made their clothes. They are important questions and they really do make a difference. Unfortunately, the fashion industry has traditionally had, and still has, a significant negative impact upon the planet and not a great history looking after the people in the supply chain. Annually the fashion industry creates more CO<sub>2</sub> emissions than all international flights and maritime shipping worldwide, which really shows how negative an impact it has.



There are factors which we will show you about how to rethink your habits and make your wardrobe more sustainable. Start at the beginning and ask yourself: Do I really need it?

If your answer is YES, I NEED IT, focus on characteristic of products.

Why not try out the 30 wears test: Livia Firth, the founder of Eco Age (a company which certifies brands for their sustainability) began the #30Wears campaign to encourage us to only buy an item if we really know that we'll wear it.

To learn more about sustainable fashion, the following links are a good starting point for your research:

- Understanding sustainable fashion, and what it means to you: <https://www.sustainablefashionmatterz.com/what-is-sustainable-fashion>
- What Is Sustainable Fashion – A Comprehensive Guide + 10 Must-Know Designers: <https://wtvox.com/sustainable-fashion/sustainable-fashion/>
- Sustainable fashion: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sustainable\\_fashion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sustainable_fashion)

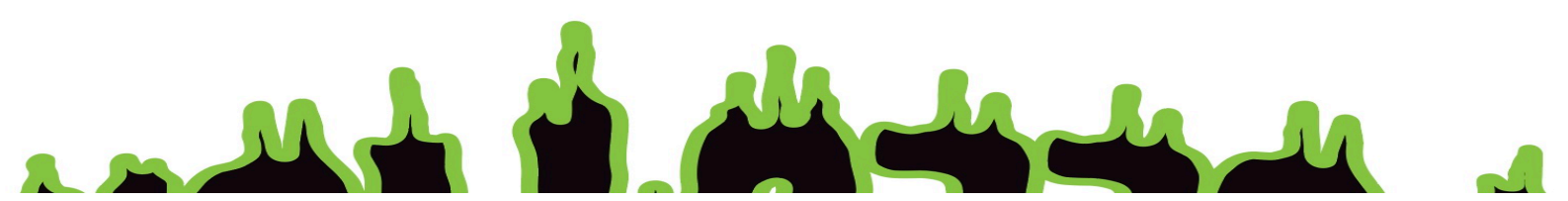
In the following links, you will find some inspiration for why it is important to have a sustainable wardrobe and why it is important to make fashion sustainable:

- Seven forms of sustainable fashion: <https://www.greenstrategy.se/sustainable-fashion/seven-forms-of-sustainable-fashion/>
- Can fashion ever be sustainable? <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200310-sustainable-fashion-how-to-buy-clothes-good-for-the-climate>
- How To Make Fashion Sustainable <https://www.fashionbeans.com/article/how-to-make-fashion-sustainable/?cmpredirect>

### Step 3: Sourcing Material In Sustainable Fashion

Choosing natural fibre over conventional clothing is a vital step towards the brighter future of our planet. Bearing in mind that the textile industry is one of the most polluting industries in the world, we really have to make important decisions concerning this issue. The clothes we wear matter much more than just how they look on us. The way clothes feel on our bodies should be also taken into consideration.

However, many people tend to overlook the origin of the fabrics used. Natural fibre clothing is one of the best choices you can make, simply because such clothes are made from natural materials that have been used for thousands of years.



Sustainable fibres include:

- Recycled Fibres - made with waste material
- Plant- Based Fibres - with low environmental impact
- Animal-Based Fibres - produced in sustainable way
- Semi-Synthetic- with low environmental impact

In the links below you can get more information about how to source sustainable materials:

- Our Fiber Eco-Review: <https://www.sustainyourstyle.org/en/fiber-ecoreview>
- What Are the Most Sustainable Fabrics?: <https://goodonyou.eco/most-sustainable-fabrics/>
- 5 Award-Winning Innovations in Sustainable Fashion Now on Indiegogo: <https://go.indiegogo.com/blog/2019/04/5-award-winning-innovations-in-sustainable-fashion-now-on-indiegogo.html>
- 5 Sustainable Fabrics Changing The Fashion Industry For Good: <https://www.thewellesentials.com/blog/5-sustainable-and-eco-friendly-textiles>

Look for clothes made from environmentally friendly raw materials such as bamboo, hemp or organic cotton. Garments made from one fibre (e.g. 100% organic cotton) can be recycled into fibres at the end of use. Deadstock can be turned into limited edition collections.

Deadstock is a term used to describe merchandise that was never sold to or used by consumers before being removed from sale, usually because it was outdated. Dead stock is often warehoused, but it can also subsequently be offered for sale and typically retains its original package and tags.

Here, you also need to consider eco-friendly textile production. For this, you need to question: are responsible processes in place for dyes and finishes? Are natural dyes used?

Here are some links which will help you to get more information about sustainable dyeing innovations:

- The guide for natural fabric dyes: the alchemy for textile artists: <https://ourgoodbrands.com/guide-natural-fabric-dyes-alchemy-textile-artists/>
- 'Greener' ways to color clothes: <https://phys.org/news/2018-07-greener-ways.html>
- 12 plant-dyed, organic clothing brands to support and wear for your wellbeing: <https://greendreamer.com/journal/sustainable-fashion-plant-dyed-clothing-brands>



Also consider clothes which are designed with minimal waste and durable materials. Well-designed clothes can be taken apart and re-introduced into the garment lifecycle.

Remember, quality fabric = longevity. To read more about this, this link might be useful:

- Why Should You Care About Preventing Waste? Small Business Guide: <https://www.epa.gov/p2/why-should-you-care-about-preventing-waste-small-business-guide>

You and your friends are really learning a lot about the environmental impact of fast fashion, and how to shop more sustainably for the good of the environment. However, it is also important to assess the human cost of fast fashion!

#### Step 4: People and Fashion

There are lots of different types of fashion, read on to find out more.

Fair Trade fashion is also about the fair treatment of the workers. In order for you to truly have a sustainable wardrobe, it is important that you insist on fair salaries and safe working conditions for each and every person involved in creating the clothes you wear. From the sourcing of raw materials to the garment factory to the shop floor; always ask your brands #whomademyclothes.

To learn more about fair trade producers working in the fashion industry, the following links are a good starting point for your research:

- Meet the Fair Trade producers behind the slow fashion movement: <https://wfto-asia.com/2018/05/16/meet-the-fair-trade-producers-behind-the-slow-fashion-movement/>
- Fair Trade Fashion: <https://www.peopletree.co.uk/about-us/fair-trade-fashion>

Ethical Fashion is about moral principles. Ethical Fashion is all about the ethics of a company and how they deal with moral principles. Maximising profits and paying fair wages don't go hand in hand when you look at all the Fast Fashion brands there are these days.

Explore more:



- The ethical clothing brands to add to your wardrobe in 2021:  
<https://www.marieclaire.co.uk/news/fashion-news/best-ethical-fashion-brands-to-know-sustainable-fashion-84169>

Slow fashion is about timeless high-quality clothing. It means producing high quality clothes, that can last for a long time. Slow Fashion clothes are considered to be timeless/durable pieces that don't senselessly follow the current trends. More information you can get here:

- What Does Slow Fashion Actually Mean?:  
<https://www.thegoodtrade.com/features/what-is-slow-fashion>
- Slow fashion: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slow\\_fashion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slow_fashion)

Fast fashion can be defined as cheap, trendy clothing, that samples ideas from the catwalk or celebrity culture and turns them into garments in high street stores at breakneck speed to meet consumer demand. Read more what Fast fashion means:

- The environmental costs of fast fashion: <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/fashion/environment-costs-fast-fashion-pollution-waste-sustainability-a8139386.html>
- Fast fashion: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fast\\_fashion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fast_fashion)

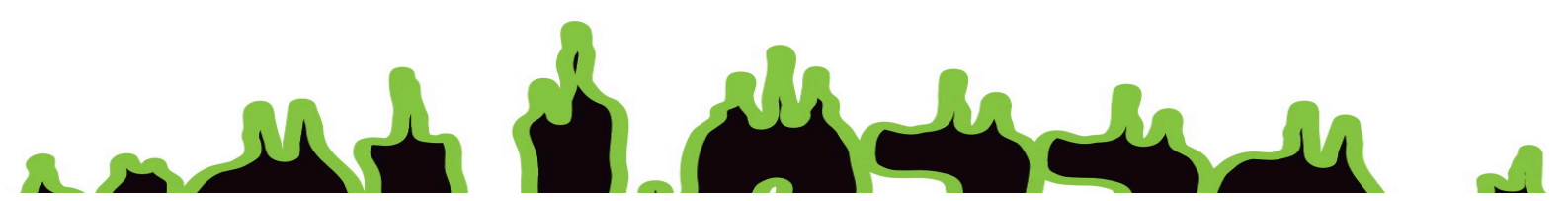
Cruelty-free-vegan fashion: Vegan Fashion implies that no animal products were used at all, once again both ethical and sustainable depending on the production process. Here you will find more about Vegan fashion:

- How to make the switch to vegan cruelty-free fashion:  
<https://ordinaryvegan.net/cruelty-free-fashion/>

### Step 5: Be Active

In this section we will show you what you can do for your new wardrobe without having to go to the store. Have you ever thought about clothes that are already at your home and you do not wear them? There are many ways to give them a new life. Or how to prevent clothes you do not wear in from accumulating at home.

Reuse and repair: Instead of sending used clothes to landfill, give them a second use or repair them. Second hand, thrift, swap, recycle... the possibilities are endless. In those links you will learn about "4R":





- The Five R's of Fashion: Reduce, Rewear, Recycle, Repair, Resell:  
<https://goodonyou.eco/5rs-of-fashion/>
- Promote repair and reuse to increase fashion sustainability, mps told:  
<https://resource.co/article/promote-repair-and-reuse-increase-fashion-sustainability-mps-told-12962>

Second hand and thrift: Avoid the negative impact of fashion production - embrace pre-loved and buy or sell pieces that already exist.

Read the link bellow about second-hand shops and their impact on sustainable Fashion:

- Second-Hand Is The Answer To Sustainable Fashion, Says Oxfam:  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/brookerobertislam/2019/08/31/second-hand-is-the-answer-to-sustainable-fashion-says-oxfam/#e3a29da98321>

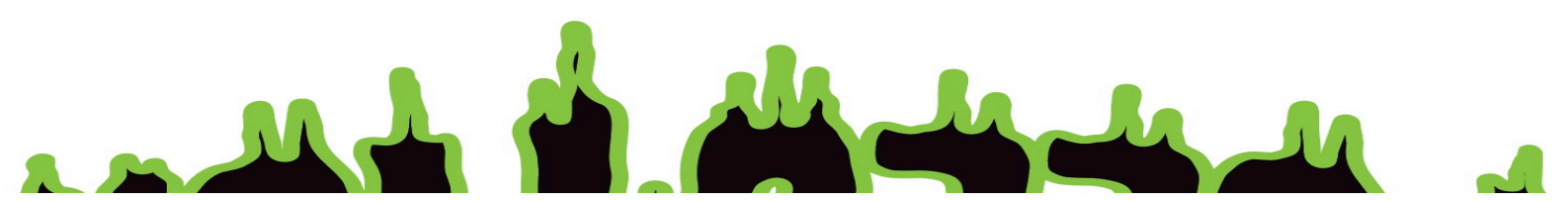
Clothing rent and swap: Rather than buying new clothes, consider renting, borrowing or swapping clothes.

Read more about clothing swaps and rent:

- How Sustainable Is Renting Your Clothes, Really?  
<https://www.elle.com/fashion/a29536207/rental-fashion-sustainability/>
- Clothing rental could be the key to a stylishly sustainable fashion industry:  
<https://theconversation.com/clothing-rental-could-be-the-key-to-a-stylishly-sustainable-fashion-industry-100106>
- Sustainable fashion trend: clothing swaps and hire:  
<https://scandinaviantraveler.com/en/lifestyle/sustainable-fashion-trend-clothing-swaps-and-hire>

Recycle: Recycle garments to reduce waste and landfill. BUT be careful, sometimes a production process involving recycled clothes and materials uses more energy and chemicals than making new garments. Read more about Recycled clothing:

- How To Create Sustainable Fashion From Recycled Clothing:  
<https://www.digitalistmag.com/improving-lives/2019/07/01/how-to-create-sustainable-fashion-from-recycled-clothing-06199289/>



### Step 6: Rethink your own Wardrobe

You have been through a complex journey of exploring the topic of sustainable fashion. You have discussed the topic with your friends, and completed some research activities together, and you really feel like you have learned a lot about the environmental and human cost of fast fashion, and what you can do to shop more sustainably!

Now that you have learned so much, it is time to put what you have learned into practice! With your friends, make a list of 10 things you will do to make your wardrobe more sustainable – and then get to putting this list into practice!

Where you will start? What you will change? The answer to creating a sustainable wardrobe is not to throw everything away and start from scratch, nor is it to stop buying clothes altogether. It's the small changes that will add up to a big difference. Good luck!

To learn more about how to build your own sustainable wardrobe, the following tips might be useful:

- Top Tips for Creating Your Sustainable Wardrobe: <https://www.fairwear.org/stories/top-tips-for-creating-your-sustainable-wardrobe/>
- 11 Basics for a More Sustainable Wardrobe <https://www.vogue.com/article/how-to-build-sustainable-wardrobe-foundation>

### **EVALUATION**

As a self- assessment exercise for this WebQuest, please answer the following questions and share your thoughts and insights with your teammates:

- If you had to share what you have achieved during this WebQuest with your friends, what would you tell them?
- How well did my team and I communicate overall?
- What were some of the most interesting discoveries I made while working on this project? About the issue of sustainable fashion? About myself and my own habits? About others and their habits?
- How will I share knowledge about Sustainable Fashion with others?
- How can I rethink my wardrobe? Am I committed to doing it to make a change?



- How can I, and will I, change my shopping habits?

## CONCLUSION

Congratulations! You have managed to successfully accomplish all your tasks and rethink your own wardrobe and learn what Sustainable Fashion means. The world of fashion is powerful, and a close eye is being kept on its actions. It is essential for brands to understand not only the role of sustainability within the decision-making process of consumers, but also to explore their attitudes and behaviours. The question is, how do today's connected consumers build brand perception and how can brands stay relevant in this demanding market? And where you will invest your money? Before buying a t-shirt think twice.

You learned how to think about clothes. Now you are ready to support your friends and to undertake the same journey, so that all together you can fight climate change by being more conscious of the influence of our actions and habits on the environment! Inform your friends about sustainable fashion. Share your new knowledge!

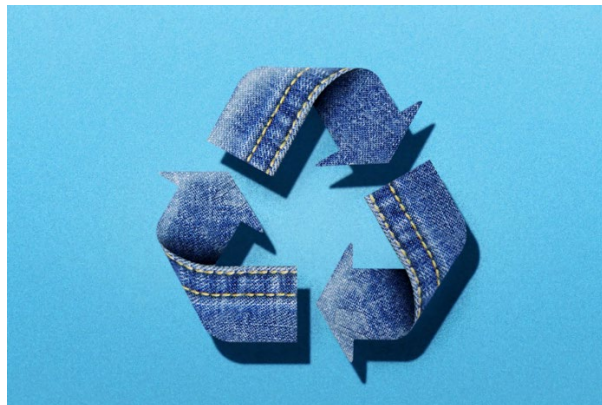
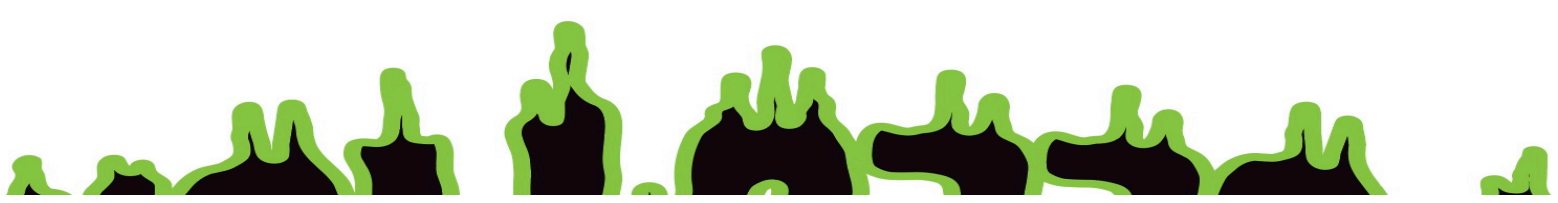


Photo by Morning Brew on Unsplash

## TUTOR SECTION

On completion of this WebQuest, young people will have achieved the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic knowledge of what Sustainable Fashion is.</li> <li>• Basic knowledge of how to evaluate one's own habits.</li> <li>• Basic knowledge about shopping habits.</li> <li>• Factual knowledge about sourcing of material in the fashion industry.</li> <li>• Theoretical knowledge of sustainability and the Natural Fabric dyes.</li> <li>• Factual knowledge about preventing waste.</li> <li>• Theoretical knowledge of Fair-Trade Fashion.</li> <li>• Theoretical knowledge about the term Ethical Fashion.</li> <li>• Factual knowledge about Slow Fashion.</li> <li>• Factual knowledge about Fast Fashion.</li> <li>• Factual knowledge on how to reuse, recycle, rent, swap etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define the meaning of the term "Sustainable fashion".</li> <li>• Assess how sustainable my habits are .</li> <li>• Practice 'thinking before buying'.</li> <li>• Define the concept "Sustainable Sourcing of material".</li> <li>• Discuss the environmental benefits of dyeing fabrics.</li> <li>• Describe the different types of fabrics that are more sustainable.</li> <li>• Discuss how to prevent waste.</li> <li>• Reflect on how humans are treated in the fashion industry.</li> <li>• Discuss what we mean by 'Slow Fashion'.</li> <li>• Discuss what we mean by 'Fast Fashion'.</li> <li>• Describe the actions we can take to avoid Fast Fashion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Willingness to be more sustainable shopping for clothes.</li> <li>• Awareness of the environmental impact of what we consume.</li> <li>• Willingness to share and promote sustainable materials in fashion.</li> <li>• Awareness of the level of pollution caused by the fashion industry.</li> <li>• Awareness of the importance of the fair treatment of the workers.</li> <li>• Increased regard for timeless high-quality clothing .</li> <li>• Willingness to self-assess and change one's own shopping habits.</li> <li>• Awareness of fashion market and low/ cheap quality clothes.</li> <li>• Willingness to share the environmental benefits of sustainable fashion and our actions with others.</li> </ul>
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**Questions that a youth worker or teacher might use in a whole class discussion to debrief this WebQuest:**

- Name the three most important facts you learned through completing this WebQuest.
- Which information surprised you the most and why?
- Would you apply the new knowledge you have gained in the future to your shopping habits?
- Is there anything you would share about the learning process?
- Are you satisfied with your work?
- Do you consider it important to share your new knowledge with others?



# SOLUTION NOT POLLUTION



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