

What is sustainability? A Quick Guide

Description



Sustainable Fibres

As the word â??sustainabilityâ?• becomes more mainstream, it is important to understand what it means and how to recognise true sustainability. We need to look after our planet, our resources and our people to ensure that we can live sustainably.

What is Sustainability?

United Nations defined sustainability as â??meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.â?•

What are the Principles of Sustainability?

For a business to operate â??sustainablyâ?• it must have either a minimal negative or a positive impact on all aspects of the economy, community, society or environment. While it is often seen as the preservation of a natural resource, it refers to these four main aspects (referred to as the main pillars of sustainability): economic, social, human and environmental, lets take a look at each of these in more detail.

Economic Sustainability

Economic sustainability looks at the long-term conservation of resources. It also requires a business or a country to use its resources efficiently so it can consistently produce an operational profit.



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Naturally Dyed Linen

Social Sustainability

Social sustainability looks at communities, cultures and globalisation. A social system can achieve a healthy society while focusing on the improvement of social quality and equality, it looks at the relationships amongst our communities, societies and cultures.

Human and Community Sustainability

Human sustainability addresses access to health care, education, services & nutrition. It looks at the systems in place to allow communities to prosper and thrive. Human sustainability focuses on the importance and rights of anyone involved in the making of products or sourcing of raw materials.

Environmental Sustainability

Environmental sustainability deals with the improvement of human welfare while protecting our natural resources, it is the place where humans can coexist with the earth with minimal impact. Environmental sustainability looks at ensuring that the needs of the population are met without compromising the needs of future generations.

In terms of what that means as consumers here are some aspects to consider when looking at companies, businesses or brands that you respect, support and admire.

How is a company addressing their carbon footprint, what are they doing to offset this?

How is a company addressing water usage given that water is becoming more scarce?

What impact does the company have on the local community, what positive initiatives or involvement does it take?

How does a company handle its waste disposal? Are there more innovative ways that a company could employ in regards to waste?

How does a company foster environmental responsibility?



Sustainable Fibres

When it comes to fabric or fibres used to make our garments, we need to look for low impact, environmentally conscious fibres grown and harvested while the people caring for the crop and manufacturing the fabric are treated with consideration and paid fairly for their labour. Itâ??s important to look for fibres or materials that support regenerative agricultural practices. Linen is a good

example of a more regenerative fibre, it uses a fifth of the fertilizer that cotton requires. It also requires four times less water than cotton and draws CO2 into the soil.

With the word â??sustainabilityâ?• being overused and often misused it is important that we take the time to understand what sustainability means and what choices we can make to support, foster and encourage a more sustainable future.

CATEGORY

1. SUSTAINABILITY

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