Global Fashion Agenda calls for action against climate change at Davos World Economic Forum

By Matthieu Guinebault - 24 January 2019

The Global Fashion Agenda association, engaged in promoting social and environmental responsibility in fashion, has presented its CEO Agenda 2019 at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. The document defines the goals industry leaders should strive for. GFA’s efforts are backed by groups and brands like Asos, Bestseller, H&M, Kering, Li & Fung, Nike and PVH.

The previous edition of the CEO Agenda was published in March 2018 at the Copenhagen Fashion Summit, and it set out four long-term objectives: eco-inspired design, circularity, better wages for textile workers and a broadly defined “fourth industrial revolution.” In addition, three short-term objectives were also identified: supply chain traceability, water preservation and worker safety.

To these, the CEO Agenda 2019 has added a new element, a fourth issue to be tackled urgently: combating climate change. GFA indicated that if the industry continues to grow at the current rate, its greenhouse gas emissions will increase by a whopping 60% by 2030 (according to data by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation). To this day, the apparel and footwear industry reportedly accounts for 8% of global emissions (according to Quantis), with 1.2 billion tonnes per year, more than the maritime and air transportation sectors combined.

“The fashion industry is one of the world's largest and most powerful. We must therefore show leadership to ensure the future of our industry - and of our planet,” said Eva Kruse, CEO of Global Fashion Agenda, adding that “climate change is an unprecedented threat to the world’s population and to the planet. We have only 11 years to rectify the catastrophic impact we have had on our planet, otherwise we will have failed to reach the target set by the Paris Climate Agreement, to keep the planet's temperature rise below the threshold of 1.5°C. We know that change isn't easy to achieve, but progress is altogether too slow and we simply cannot afford to waste another year.”
Specifically, this new item on the CEO Agenda engages stakeholders in deploying emission-reduction measures across the entire supply chain, with leading corporations called upon to set the example, by imposing targeted objectives consistent with those set out in the Paris Climate Agreement. More generally, GFA is calling on industry leaders to work with their peers, suppliers, investors and politicians to promote far-reaching change across the entire supply chain.

Global Fashion Agenda (GFA) is an umbrella association created around the Copenhagen Fashion Summit, the event which has now emerged as the main gathering of ethical and sustainable fashion labels. GFA notably set itself the mission of publishing studies and reports on sustainability issues, as well as lobbying with Danish, European and international institutions to promote a more sustainable fashion industry.