WWF and H&M tie up for sustainable fashion

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The Worldwide Fund for nature (WWF) and Swedish fashion retailer H&M have announced a five year global partnership on World Water Day on March 22.

The new agreement expands the successful partnership from 2013, focusing on water stewardship, to also include climate action and a strategic dialogue related to H&M's and the fashion industry's broader sustainability challenges. This marks one more step towards a truly sustainable fashion industry, H&M said on its website.

"Together, we are taking a holistic and science-based approach that aims to break new ground within sustainability and fashion. After working closely together with H&M for the past three years, we know they are committed to being good stewards of shared resources, and eager to contribute to shifting the industry towards more sustainable models," said Mariann Eriksson, Marketing Director at WWF.

H&M and WWF’s previous partnership focused on moving H&M towards best practice on water stewardship. This work has led to improved water awareness among H&M staff and suppliers and has brought stakeholders from business, civil society and politics together to contribute to more sustainable water management in entire river basins in China and Bangladesh.

In Bangladesh, a report was recently published, analyzing the economic risk factors for the apparel industry and the crucial linkage to sustainable water use. In China, the partnership results include an Industrial Park project, where suppliers share resources and improve their water and chemical management. The new partnership includes taking the previous commitments in water to the next level while also expanding into new areas of climate and sustainability strategy.

"This partnership enables H&M to explore future possibilities and address two of our main sustainability challenges, climate and water, in a constructive way. Simultaneously we’re aiming to influence our industry to move in the same direction. The partnership will showcase to other companies that taking on sustainable business practices is fundamental for future business success", said Pierre Börjesson, Sustainability Business Expert Climate & Water, H&M.

H&M and WWF will continue their work with water stewardship with increased focus on collective action with other
H&M and WWF will continue their work with water stewardship with increased focus on collective action with other companies, policy makers and civil society at chosen river basins in China. On climate, WWF and H&M will work to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions in prioritized parts of H&M’s value chain by working with suppliers, customers and policy makers towards a low carbon future.

The creation of a strategic dialogue aims to support H&M in the journey to be truly sustainable, moving towards circularity and leading change in the industry.

Efforts in the new partnership will be aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, H&M said.