NIFT alumni lead pledge to fight plastic use in fashion

By Isabelle Crossley  -  6 June 2018

On June 5, India was the host of World Environment Day and the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) Alumni chose the occasion to lead a petition with over 125 professional signatures pledging to fight plastic use in fashion.

The pledge to eliminate single use plastics from the Indian fashion industry was signed by a wide array of professionals and businesses including members of Levi Strauss, Aditya Birla Group, Arvind Fashions, Shoppers Stop, Third Eyesight, Adidas, ITC Limited, Triburg, Bestseller Group, Landmark Group, Hermes Otto, C&A, Amazon, and Marks & Spencer among others. The pledge detailed the harmful effects of the overuse of plastic in the fashion industry and the importance of eliminating such waste. This was in keeping with the theme of this year’s World Environment Day which was ending plastic pollution.

The Chief Executive of the consulting firm Third Eyesight and a Founding Member of NIFTA, Devangshu Dutta, said on the occasion: “Fashion, consumer products and retail sectors are opinion-leaders and trendsetters worldwide. To beat plastic pollution, we need to entirely rethink our approach to plastic products and components, from design, to production and usage, including raw materials, trims, accessories and packaging.”

Plastic is widely used throughout the fashion sector for packaging materials and trimmings which are often useful for adding product durability. However, when discarded, these plastics can greatly harm the environment as some plastics take centuries to decompose in landfills and the popular packaging material Polystyrene can even take up to thousands of years to decompose.

The NIFT Alumni petition is one of many moves being made in the Indian fashion industry to promote sustainability. As India is a hub for garment production and is therefore directly impacted by the negative effects of plastic pollution caused by the industry, this pledge has come at a pressing time.