

Sustainability at Retail

IN JANUARY 2016, THE UNITED NATIONS began to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The agenda was a transformative plan of action based on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that addressed the urgent global challenges over the next 15 years. In reaction to the growing need for sustainability, the Shop! Global Council identified five of the UN Sustainability Development Goals that were most applicable to the retail industry. These were chosen out of a variety of factors including:

- The need for greater economic responsibility and greater local employment.
- The need for efficient use of resources.
- The need for waste management in production sites and displays production.
- The need for the use of clean technologies & processes (renewable energy, eco calculator).
- The need for Shop! to speak as one voice for the industry on Sustainability at Retail.



UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BRANDS & RETAILERS



9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE



Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation.

Increase R&D and added value for goods and services.

12 RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION



Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

Increase focus on reduction of raw material consumption/energy consumption, development of re-employment and recycling, in anticipation of end of life.

- Show consumers they do not have to give something up by choosing a sustainable option.
- Partner with vendors and suppliers to develop innovative green spaces.
- Invest in new technologies and programs to create green products and material recycling.
- Partner with innovative logistics partners to provide eco-friendly convenient delivery and shipping options.
- Team up with universities or participate in think tanks to step aside from the traditional business paths, think about organizational challenges, and provide clear, innovative solutions to environmental challenges.

- Factor an internal carbon price into capital project decisions.
- Increase energy efficiency across the value chain including sourcing, manufacturing, packaging, and logistics.
- Reduce packaging and increase recycling of end products and by-products of the production process.
- Raise consumer awareness of the importance of sustainable consumption and practical steps they can take to live more sustainably.
- Develop and apply common standards and methodologies for sustainability across the life cycle of a product.
- Create takeback programs for used garments where customers return clothing for store credit. Gently used clothes can be cleaned, repaired, and then sold in "renew" stores. Damaged items can be recycled into new fibers for new designs.



Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

To achieve this goal [to not exceed +2°C], global greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced from 40% to 70% in 2050 (compared to 2020 levels), and reach levels of emission close to zero by 2100.

- Implement practices that significantly reduce operating energy per square foot.
- Use recycled and low-carbon materials.
- Use fixtures that can be reconfigured to maximize productivity and change with the needs of the department.
- Insist on materials (for the store environment and those sold) to be sourced locally, created with low-impact processes, and free of harmful chemicals.
- Reuse buildings, spaces, and materials that already exist—adapting them to meet new needs instead of building new.



Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources.

- Work across value chains to protect water resources, promote responsible water use and help to ensure access to clean water for all.
- Ensure supplier companies that ship goods by sea adhere to environmental standards for marine shipping.
- Look for ways to reduce plastic packaging in product distribution and/or supply chain.
- Look for ways to reuse and/or recycle plastic packaging.
- Actively managing any other impacts on the marine environment and coastal ecosystems associated with your own operations. Impacts might arise from, for example, shipping, electricity and telecoms transmission, or oil and gas exploration and extraction.



Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss.

- Conduct regular life-cycle assessments of products and services.
- Sell products that are made with sustainably sourced materials such as cotton and wood.
- Improve transparency and traceability in the textile supply chain, requiring suppliers to responsibly source raw materials and products.
- Extend the effective management of biodiversity and ecosystems services to the supply chain.
- Adopt a sustainable forestry policy, which includes purchasing guidelines for materials that go into the company's clothing and packaging, especially wood pulp, paper, and wood-based fabrics like rayon and viscose.



To learn more about Sustainability at Retail, read the full white paper at shopassociation.org/industry-reports/