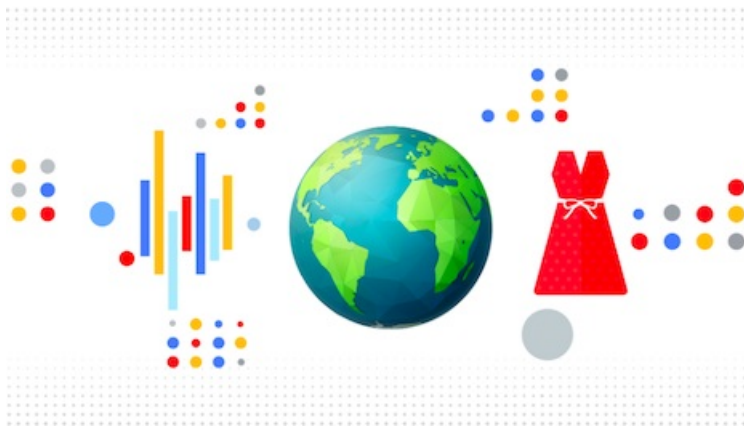


APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Google, collaborating with WWF Sweden, makes fashion play with new data-backed sustainability platform

June 10, 2020



*Google's next foray: Bringing fashion down to earth from the clouds. Image credit: Google*

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

Internet giant Google will launch a new environmental data platform in conjunction with wildlife charity WWF Sweden to promote responsible sourcing decisions in the fashion business.

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The fashion sustainability platform will rope in projects from each organization and invite fashion brands to use Google Cloud to better assess the impact of raw materials that go into apparel manufacturing. This marks Google's big push for its cloud business to tap into the current pivot for sustainable fashion practices.

"It's our ambition to create a data-enriched decision-making platform that enables analysis of the supply chain in a way that has not been possible before at this scale," said Ian Pattison, head of customer engineering for retail at Google UK/IE, in a statement.

"Partnering with WWF brings together Google Cloud's technical capacity, including Big Data analysis and machine learning, and WWF's deep knowledge of assessing raw materials," he said.

"Together, we can make supply chain data visible and accessible to decision makers, and drive more responsible and sustainable decisions."

### Chain reaction

The fashion business is now under more scrutiny than ever for its sourcing practices and footprint of supply chains.

The industry currently accounts for [20 percent of wastewater](#) and between [2 percent and 8 percent of greenhouse gas emissions worldwide, which can potentially rise by as much as 50 percent by 2030](#).

Most of this environmental impact occurs at the raw materials stage in the production process. At this point, supply chains can be highly fragmented, making gathering and assessing data at scale a challenge.

The alliance between Google and WWF Sweden is meant to meet this need. The platform can be used on a

standalone basis or to complement ongoing efforts within an organization.

[Google Cloud announced a pilot](#) last year at the Copenhagen Fashion Summit with eco-friendly fashion brand Stella McCartney to use its technology to offer more insight into the raw materials of apparel makers' supply chains.

That work continues, making Stella McCartney the first fashion brand to test the platform.

WWF Sweden and long-term collaborator and Swedish furniture maker IKEA created a similar tool in 2018 to focus on analyzing the risk and effects of various textile raw materials.

"WWF's partnership work with companies has always been motivated by the need to drive real transformation at the largest possible scale," said Hkan Wirtm, CEO of WWF Sweden, in a statement.

"This project is an excellent example of how we can take valuable work with a long-term partner like IKEA, collaborate with another strong WWF partner like Google to make that work even more powerful, and make it open source so that hopefully it can help with the transformation of a whole industry," he said.

The new platform from Google and WWF Sweden will move beyond cotton and viscose to include numerous additional raw materials based on WWF data and knowledge.

IN ADDITION to Stella McCartney and IKEA, WWF Sweden and Google are in talks with many fashion, luxury, denim and athletic brands and retailers.

"Sustainability is a challenge that crosses industry boundaries, and we firmly believe that solutions require strong partnerships and collaboration," said Kate Brandt, Google's sustainability officer, in a statement.

"Our ambition is to fill fundamental data gaps by bringing greater accuracy to environmental reporting, ultimately moving toward more sustainable processes," she said.

"By combining our technology, and with data inputs from many key industry brands and retailers, we believe we can significantly magnify this work together."

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