

The fashion value chain

We screen all companies that join SF.Collective, including the Sustainable Fashion Gift Card, along the fashion value chain. The fashion value chain is complex with lots of steps, which we divide among three phases: production phase, user phase and the end of life phase. The value chain can also be applied to any other textile item.

For a large part, this value chain can also be used for any other item made from different materials, such as leather. However, there are (some) differences, especially in the production phase.

Production phase

How do you produce your garments/items as sustainably as possible?

- Garment dyeing and finishing
- Clothing factories where garments are sewed together/assembled and finished
- Fabric dyeing, printing, finishing
- Yarn production
- Raw materials

User phase

How do you ensure that the use of garments/items is optimised, increased and that each garment/item is kept as long as possible in the loop? Especially the garments/items you have brought to the market?

Intensify utilisation

- Resell
- Rental
- Lease
- Swap

Lifespan extension

- Repair service
- Upcycling
- Good quality
- Emotional value

End of life phase

If a garment or an item is really worn and used out, how do you discard it as responsible as possible? By keeping any available resources still in the loop?

- Give it back - safely - to the earth's soil. This means a garment/item will compost and will be part of the earth's soil again within a few months.
- Recycle
- Recover

Key enabler across the value chain:

- Logistics, including reverse logistics
- transparency

5. Sustainability practices

Newly made sustainable items

Our definition: In the full lifecycle of these items, people, planet and animals are taken into account and are formed based on ethical behaviour and decision making.

You can partly recognise these items based on a few **green** characteristics or certifications used. Whether human and animal rights are respected, needs assurance by certification or you will need to do more research on the value chain of the item.

Good quality green fabrics

- Virgin sustainable fabrics - i.e. organic cotton and lyocell, eco-vero, deadstock or recycled fabrics, which may or may not come with certification.

Reducing textile waste - in combination with consciously selected fabrics

- Made from (almost) zero waste patterns or 3D knitting technology.
- Items that are created on demand (and maybe slightly adjusted for personalisation)

Designed and produced with end of life in mind

- Easy recycable
- Fully natural and biodegradable, which may or may not come with a certification.

New ways of consumption and design

Optimise utilisation

Resell

Our definition: Items that have been owned by others before and are resold on the market. Resell can take place by a professional 'second hand or vintage' store or by the owner via a peer-to-peer platform like Vindted.

Rental service

Our definition: Characterised by its short term nature and can be extended on a month-to-month, or even day-to-day basis. Unlike selling an item, the rental company remains the owner of the rented item.

Lease service

Our definition: A long term agreement, usually covering a couple of months, which both parties have agreed upon. Unlike selling an item, the lease company remains the owner of the leased item.

Swap service

Our definition: People can hand in items and in return can select other (pre-loved) items or get some sort of coupon. With the coupon they can select other items at a later moment. A swap service may charge handling costs, but this can only be a few euros. If people aim to swap their items for items that are with more, a swap service may charge an extra fee.

Items with multiple functions or looks

Our definition: Items that are designed in such a way that it can transform into various clothing items. For example, the item can be both worn / used as a dress and pants. Or: one item, but when worn / used differently, it shows different colours.

Extend the lifespan

Repair service

Our definition: offer a service for existing items and new sustainably produced items.

Good quality and timeless design

Our definition: Besides technical specification, this can be assumed based on the below characteristics:

- Items have a lifelong guarantee
- Sound vision of the company, which is turned into reality, on how items should be designed and produced to make them last a lifetime.
- Items are designed to stay forever in the collection and stay relevant - aiming to not fuel our neediness for newness.

Upcycling

Our definition:

- Bringing discarded items up to date, while keeping its function - i.e. a shirt remains a shirt, so it can be reintroduced to the market.
- Using various parts of discarded items in the creation of a new item with the same function.
- Changing discarded items or use parts of various discarded items to create a new item with a different function - i.e. a shirt becomes a skirt.

Items that are modular

Our definition: Items that are designed in such a way that they can be easily taken apart, repaired, customised, and so on.

Emotional value

Our definition: During the creation of this item, an emotional connection with the item was consciously invested in, for example by choosing a custom made item for a specific memorable occasion or purpose, or by having created an item yourself. The emotional value may trigger people to take better care of the item, keep it longer - and at least: not just carelessly throw it away, but make sure it always ends up somewhere where it's appreciated.

Experiences and learning

Sustainable style coaching

The core of sustainable style coaching is not to fuel the need for more clothes (also not pre-loved) and trends, but to stay close to someone's personality. When taking someone's personality as a starting point, the coaching method offers people tools and insights to dress and manage their wardrobe more consciously and creatively. As a result, misbuys can be avoided and people feel happier, more comfortable and confident with what they wear.

Consciously: through coaching people can be made more aware of options like how or where to repair their clothing.

Creatively: people know better their own unique style and how to dress accordingly. They have been given the tools to create more outfits, while owning - and buying - less clothes.

Do it yourself

Our definition: Teach or give people the means to create, upcycle or repair items themselves. This can be done in various ways:

- One-day-workshops in groups
- A course, consisting of various workshops in groups
- Private instruction
- Repair or sewing café, with optional guidance
- Sell patterns
- Sell fabrics, trims and other sewing appliances

Conscious events

Our definition: Ad hoc or regularly organised in addition to your core business. The events are aimed to get people familiar and enthusiastic about a more conscious (fashion) lifestyle or specific brands.

- Swap parties
- Secondhand markets
- Sewing or repair events
- Sustainable pop-ups
- Film screenings
- Talks

6. Well known sustainability frameworks we have used for defining our sustainability approach

R-ladder

R1: Refuse

Make a product obsolete by eliminating its function. With your products, ask yourself, is the function/product really necessary? Do we need to produce it? Or offer a radically different product or service. Can we improve the function / product?

R2: Rethink (heroverwegen)

By designing and developing your product with a circular vision, your product immediately contains much more value than if it were handled in the linear way. The linear (traditional) system is based on take-make-waste. Within the circular business model, the product is developed, without waste and pollution, with the goal of lasting as long as possible.

R3: Reduce (verminderen)

Producing products more efficiently and better reduces pollution and waste. Through efficient resource use and production, less (new) material is needed, this also results in cost savings.

R4: Reuse (hergebruiken)

Reuse is about reusing the product and raw materials while maintaining its original function. When products are made of good quality, they last longer. If they last longer, this often also means that the products can get a 2nd life in the 2nd hand circuit. If they are no longer suitable for that, the products or raw materials are better to re- and upcycle, because of their high quality.

R5: Repair

The lifespan of products can often be extended by repairing them or having them repaired. The result is less water consumption and CO2 emissions, less pressure on (scarce) raw materials and less overproduction.

R6: Refurbish

Restoring a discarded product and bringing it up to date so it can be reintroduced to the market. This business model is already common with phones and laptops. An old exterior, with new software.

R7: Remanufacture

Use parts from a discarded product in a new product with the same function. With this approach, you need fewer new parts when developing a new product.

R8: Repurpose

Products or parts can be reused in another product with a different function. Companies are increasingly offering their own collection point.

R9: Recycle

In recycling, the raw materials from the discarded products are reused to be incorporated into a new product. This reduces the procurement of new raw materials, water use and CO2 emissions. In the circular system, clothes are not seen as disposable items, but as new raw materials.

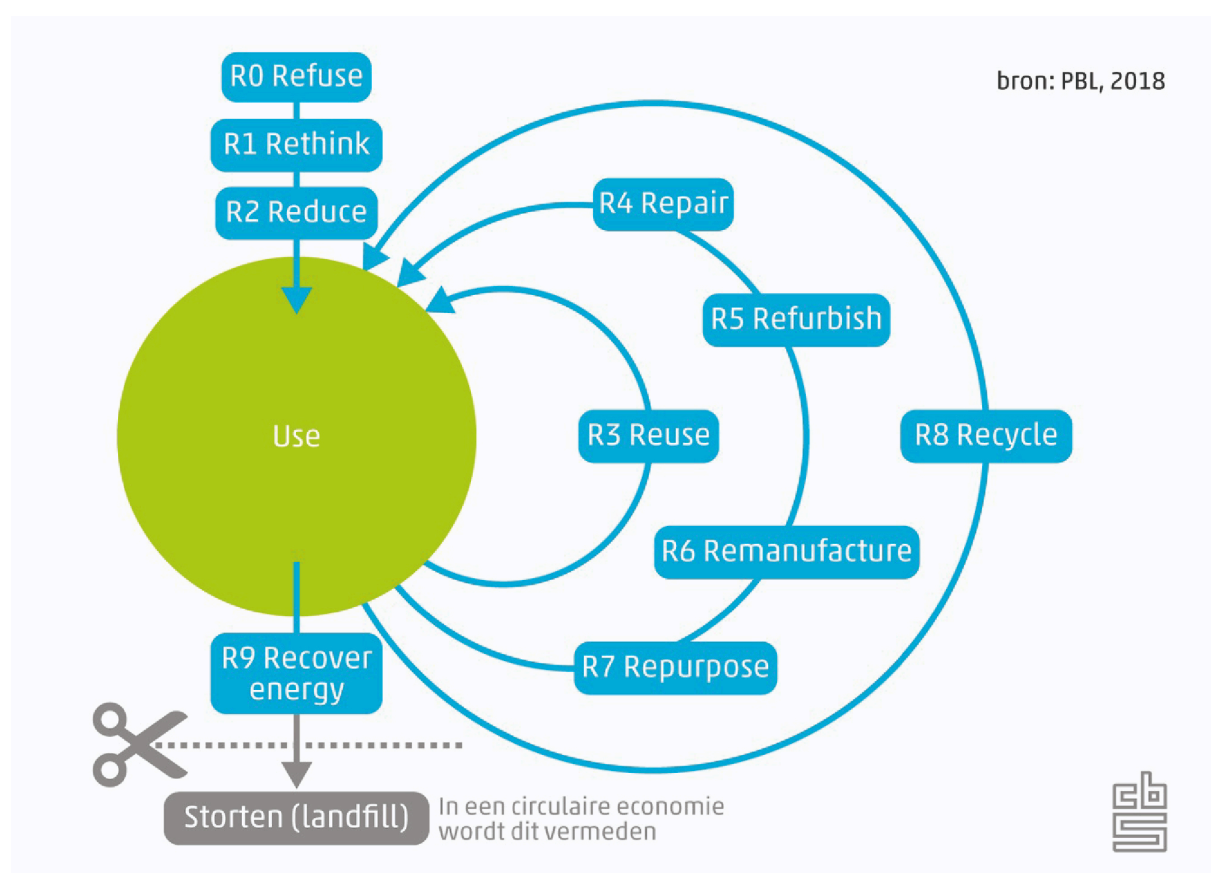
R10: Recover (terugwinnen)

When a product cannot be recycled, it is burned to recover energy. In a circular economy, as few materials as possible end up at this step.

Text based on:

<https://www.biancastreng.nl/blog/r-ladder-in-fashion/>

<https://www.rvo.nl/onderwerpen/r-ladder>



Circular business models (Accenture)

Through research, Accenture identified five circular business models.

Resource recovery

Aims at reusing resources or energy from disposed products or by-products.

Circular inputs (sometimes referred to as circular supplies)

Scarce resources are replaced with (fully) renewable, recyclable or biodegradable resource inputs.

Product life extension

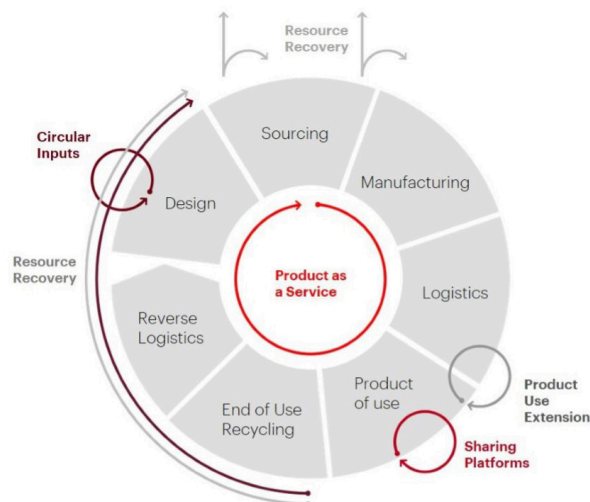
Extend the lifetime of a product through remanufacturing, repairing, upgrading or reselling.

Sharing platforms (peer-to-peer)

Based on the sharing of goods and assets. Perfect for products that are either not frequently used by a person or a company.

Product as a service

In this case customers don't buy a product but a company gives them access to it through a lease, rental, or pay-per-use arrangement. This model encourages companies to produce qualitative products that last longer and can be easily repaired.



Typical value chain



CIRCULAR INPUTS
Use of renewable energy, bio-based or potentially completely recyclable materials



SHARING PLATFORMS
Increased usage rates through collaborative models for usage, access, or ownership



PRODUCT AS A SERVICE
Offer of product use with retention of the product at the producer to increase resource productivity



PRODUCT USE EXTENSION
Prolongation of product use through repair, reprocessing, upgrading and resale



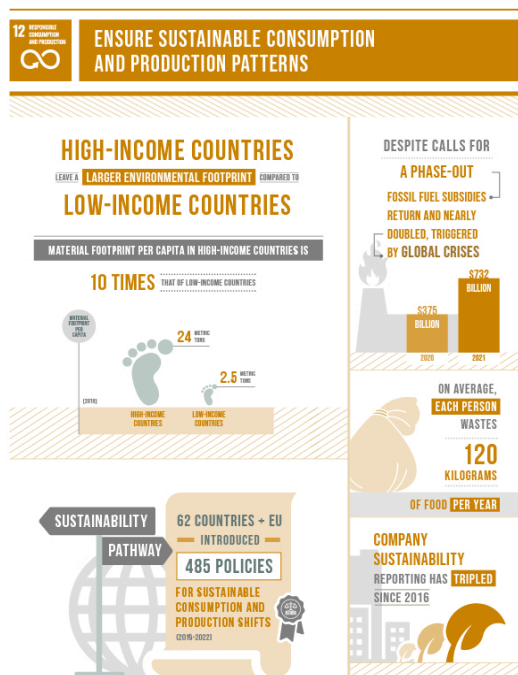
RESOURCE RECOVERY
Recovery of usable resources or energy from waste or by-products

Sustainable Development Goals

The name of the goals pretty much speak for itself, but find a more elaborate explanation - and targets on the [UN SDG website](https://www.un.org/sdgs/).

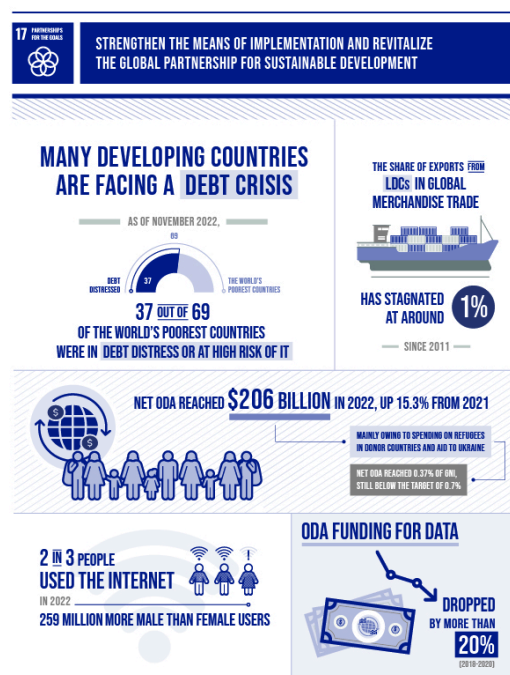
As SF.Collective we focus on SDG17: Partnerships for the goals. And as a collective, through our partnership, we especially focus on SDG12: Responsible consumption and production. We do this by distributing the Sustainable Fashion Gift Card and promoting through our PR Programme and services sustainable fashion and more conscious consumption patterns with regards to fashion.

More about [SDG12](https://www.un.org/sdgs/)



THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS REPORT 2023: SPECIAL EDITION- UNSTATS.UN.ORG/SDGS/REPORT/2023/

More about [SDG17](https://www.un.org/sdgs/)



THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS REPORT 2023: SPECIAL EDITION- UNSTATS.UN.ORG/SDGS/REPORT/2023/

1. No poverty
2. Zero hunger
3. Good health and well-being
4. Quality Education
5. Gender equality
6. Clean water and sanitation
7. Affordable and clean energy
8. Decent work and economic growth
9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure
10. Reduced inequalities
11. Sustainable cities and economies
12. Responsible consumption and production
13. Climate action
14. Life below water
15. Life on land
16. Peace, justice and strong institutions
17. Partnership for the goals

Other methodologies, policies and frameworks that have inspired us

- [Cradle-to-Cradle](#)
- [Regenerative fashion](#)
- [Biomimicry](#)
- [International Labour Standards](#)
- [Human rights declaration](#)
- [The donut economy](#)
- [Give legal rights to animals en nature](#)
- [Rights of Nature](#)
- [The Five Freedoms in animal care and welfare](#)