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Ambitious vision for man-made cellulosic fibres promises greater resilience for global textile industry

As COVID-19 continues to impact textile producers and buyers, a new report from international sustainability non-profits, Forum for the Future and Textile Exchange, highlights the huge potential of man-made cellulosic fibres (MMCF) – including viscose, modal and lyocell – to create a more sustainable future, and outlines an ambitious sector-wide vision that could revolutionise the textile and apparel industry, with implications for a wide variety of other industries from health to personal care.

17th June 2020 –With COVID-19 and climate change causing lasting disruption in the textile and apparel industry, the most significant industry players and stakeholders in the man-made cellulosic fibres (MMCF) value chain have today revealed an ambitious shared vision for unleashing the fibres' huge untapped potential for building resilience in the global textile industry.

Man-made cellulosic fibres are the second biggest cellulosic fibre group after cotton and have the potential to contribute to realising circular fashion, regenerating ecosystems, providing vital carbon sinks, and increasing community resilience and prosperity. Created with co-convenors, Forum for the Future and Textile Exchange, the vision outlines how the MMCF value chain can take the lead in transforming the textile and apparel sectors while building on existing standards and the progress already being driven by existing industry initiatives to address specific social and environmental issues. It calls on businesses and industry actors – from apparel and personal care brands to fibre producers – to align behind its goals and act collaboratively to build a resilient industry that helps regenerate society and the planet at the same time.

The MMCF 2030 Vision sets out five interrelated areas for ambitious and collaborative action along the entire lifecycle – from raw material sourcing and fibre production right through to disposal and re-use – to help move the sector forward at the pace and scale needed and stimulate new kinds of partnerships and investment:

1. **Regenerating ecosystems:** Restoring natural ecosystems, ensuring a carbon negative value chain, and taking regenerative landscape approaches
2. **Producing with zero harm:** Managing chemicals and other inputs, zero emissions and closed-loop production systems
3. **Enabling circular systems:** Designing, incentivising and implementing circular value chains and zero waste
4. **Creating prosperity:** Distributing economic value equitably, applying living wage and equality, universal access to education & healthcare
5. **Upholding rights:** Community empowerment and related access rights, protecting the rights of individuals, indigenous peoples and other communities

The vision sets out the activities required to deliver the ambition within each of the five areas, as well as commentary on where challenges need to be overcome. The vision also highlights the critical enabling factors needed for delivery, including collaboration across the value chain, positive voice and advocacy, full transparency and traceability, robust metric systems for



impact measurement, sharing best practice and accelerating innovation, flows of finance, consumer education, affordability of solutions, self-regulation and enabling policy.

The vision is launched at a time when COVID-19 is hitting the MMCF sector considerably. The shared vision, therefore, becomes even more important as a guiding star for the industry as it emerges from this crisis in a manner that will both build industry resilience and reduce the likelihood of future disruptions.

Dr. Sally Uren, Chief Executive Officer at Forum for the Future, commented: *“The MMCF sector is facing significant social and environmental challenges, including deforestation, chemical use and labour rights. The current COVID-19 crisis is intensifying these challenges. While progress is being made on traceability, innovation and sourcing practice, opportunities for deeper, systemic change are being lost in the absence of a holistic approach to addressing these interrelated challenges within the full value chain. By aligning behind a shared vision for a resilient and sustainable industry, the MMCF industry could lead the transformation of the apparel and textile sector, as well as make a positive contribution to other industries that source this versatile fibre. We now invite actors from across the industry to explore how they will work together to achieve this vision.”*

The vision with its five components and enablers will be taken forward by the industry and facilitated through the [Textile Exchange MMCF Round Table](#). Industry stakeholders will convene in early November when various initiatives will give updates on progress against the vision and participants will identify the critical innovation areas that need to be taken forward collectively beyond what is already happening.

LaRhea Pepper, Managing Director for Textile Exchange, said, *“Textile Exchange has seen the industry make great strides in our nearly twenty years of operation, but we know it still has a long way to go. 2020 is kicking off a decade of change and the launch of the MMCF Vision is a big driver of the change that is needed! We must reduce carbon emissions from fiber and material production by 2030. Textile Exchange has adopted a Climate+ Strategy to accomplish this and increasing the uptake of preferred man-made cellulosic fibers is part of the solution.*

“Not sure where to start? Collective, connected action accomplishes more than any organization can do alone and is why we convene the textile and apparel community in a pre-competitive, fiber-specific space. Help us achieve the MMCF Vision— join us at the next MMCF Round Table.”

Mr. Eisaku Maeda, Senior General Manager, Bemberg Division at Asahi Kasei Corporation, said: *“Amid the demand for reforms toward the realization of a sustainable society on a global scale, as well as in the fashion industry, it is essential to accelerate the establishment of a circular economy through transparent production processes with low environmental impact and sustainable materials which have high traceability. MMCF is a material with various characteristics that can meet these needs and we are convinced that activities such as the MMCF Vision will be collectively taken forward by all those involved to ensure MMCF become a more sustainable material that is needed by the world. Asahi Kasei will continue to make even more efforts so that we can take this leap forward and we thank Textile Exchange, Forum for the Future, and all the stakeholders for creating this kind of opportunity.”*



Bey Soo Khiang, Vice Chairman of RGE Group, said, *“The conception of a shared MMCF 2030 Vision is timely. MMCF as a bio-based fibre is gaining a lot of attention, and industry expectations are high. While other fibre segments like cotton and polyester have long developed consensus and rallied action around sustainable production, it is only in recent years that key MMCF actors have come together to discuss collective action and set goals to aspire towards. This Vision is a critical part of the conversation and consolidates ongoing discussions to provide coherence and direction. The Vision’s broad and inclusive design identifies and articulates clearly the material considerations for MMCFs to grow sustainably. RGE’s viscose business groups, Sateri and Asia Pacific Rayon, look forward to contributing to the realisation of the Vision.”*

The year-long process to build the vision was made possible with funding from Asahi Kasei and the Partnership for Sustainable Textiles, and support from Target and C&A, with input from over 50 stakeholders ranging from producers, suppliers and brands to INGOs and standards organisations.

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For more information, interviews, or comment, please email [Donna Worley](mailto:Donna.Worley@textileexchange.org), Director of Marketing Communications and Public Relations for Textile Exchange.

NOTES TO EDITORS

About the Man-made Cellulosic Fibres 2030 Vision

The MMCF 2030 Vision aims to provide a shared vision to drive the sector towards collectively putting more back into the environment and society than it takes out – from source to finished product. It was built by the sector through an extensive participative process engaging over 50 stakeholders from more than 40 organisations representing views from across the MMCF value chain. It is not intended as a formal commitment document or standard against which organisations will be measured. Instead, it seeks to serve as a set of guiding principles to inform how existing standards and practices must move at an accelerated pace, and towards which truly pioneering organisations can lead the sector to go further, faster. The vision complements existing standards by challenging actors to look *beyond* what might be possible now – a call to action that seeks to stimulate new kinds of partnerships and forms of cross-sector collaboration to ensure that MMCF can reach its full potential as a sustainable fibre.

Read the report here – <https://textileexchange.org/materials/pfm-round-tables/pmmc/> or <https://www.forumforthefuture.org/man-made-cellulosic-fibres>

What is sustainability?

Forum for the Future’s definition of sustainability is:

“Sustainability is a dynamic process which enables all people to realise their potential and to improve their quality of life in ways that simultaneously protect and enhance the Earth’s life support system.”

About Forum for the Future

Forum for the Future is a leading international sustainability non-profit with offices in London, New York, Singapore and Mumbai. We specialise in addressing critical global challenges by catalysing change in key systems.

For over 20 years, we’ve been working in partnership with business, governments and civil society to accelerate the shift toward a sustainable future. Together we are reinventing the way the world works.

Find out more at www.forumforthefuture.org or by following [@Forum4theFuture](https://twitter.com/Forum4theFuture) on Twitter.

About Textile Exchange



Textile Exchange is a global non-profit that creates leaders in the sustainable fiber and materials industry. The organization develops, manages, and promotes a suite of leading industry standards, as well as collects and publishes critical industry data and insights that enable brands and retailers to measure, manage and track their use of preferred fiber and materials.

With more than 400 members who represent leading brands, retailers and suppliers, Textile Exchange has, for years, been positively impacting climate through accelerating the use of preferred fibers across the global textile industry and is now making it an imperative goal through its **2030 Strategy: Climate+**. Under the Climate+ strategic direction, Textile Exchange will be the driving force for urgent climate action with a goal of 35-45% reduced CO2 emissions from textile fiber and material production by 2030.

To join the TE MMCF Round Table visit <https://textileexchange.org/materials/pfm-round-tables/pmmc/>

To learn more about Textile Exchange, visit www.TextileExchange.org. Follow us on Twitter at [@TextileExchange](https://twitter.com/TextileExchange).