

## **Fashion's Not So Little Secret: It Is Time to Clean Up Our Big Mess**

By [Ghostwriter's Name - Ralph Lauren CEO Patrice Louvet]

For decades, the fashion industry has contributed to a significant waste problem. According to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation for a Circular Economy, the industry produces 92 million tons of textile waste annually. That is equivalent to one truckload of garbage dumped into a landfill every second. While many brands may claim to be sustainable, they flood the market with cheap, disposable clothing that can barely withstand a season.

### **At Ralph Lauren, sustainability is not just a marketing tool.**

"Timelessness means designing for longevity—clothing meant to be worn, loved, and passed down." This philosophy aligns with the values in our Global Citizenship and Sustainability Report. However, timelessness is not just about aesthetics; it is about responsibility. If the industry does not change how it produces, sells, and disposes of clothing, it will continue to be one of the world's most harmful polluters, if not the largest polluter of any industry. That is simply unacceptable.

### **Circular fashion is not a trend—it is a necessity.**

For decades, the fashion industry has operated on a take-make-waste model. Brands introduce new collections every few weeks; consumers buy them, and those garments are discarded and become waste within months. The alternative is a circular economy, where clothing is designed to last, made with sustainable materials, has an ethical supply chain, and is easily recycled or repurposed at the end of its lifecycle. Ralph Lauren is not just talking the talk but walking the walk when transitioning to a more circular fashion model. A prime example is The Recycled Cotton Polo, 'the first-ever 100% GRS-certified cotton polo, setting a new standard for sustainable luxury,' as per our corporate sustainability initiatives. The Cradle-to-Cradle-certified cashmere sweaters further underscore our belief that high-quality craftsmanship, design, and sustainability coexist.

However, circularity cannot be successful unless the entire industry commits to reducing waste at every production stage. Greenwashing—branding a garment as sustainable while quietly discarding excess inventory—will no longer be tolerated. Consumers expect transparency, and so do we.

### **Sustainability without accountability is just marketing.**

It is easy to discuss sustainability when it is convenient. Ralph Lauren believes in measurable action. The company's Carbon Leadership Program now includes nearly half its core fabric suppliers. We are working towards a standard for reducing carbon emissions by a minimum of 63 percent by 2030. Beyond climate impact, sustainability is about people. Ralph Lauren's partnership with Diné (Navajo) artisan Naomi Glasses is more than an artistic collaboration. It is a commitment to preserving Indigenous craftsmanship while ensuring fair, ethical compensation and cultural integrity. Ralph Lauren is deeply committed to people and will continue to make respectful and meaningful connections.

Fashion's environmental footprint extends beyond production. This is why Ralph Lauren has introduced the Birds of a Feather capsule collection, a collaboration with Billie Eilish, available exclusively on RalphLauren.com. Digital-first fashion is not just about convenience; it reduces overproduction and waste by ensuring brands produce only what consumers genuinely demand. We are working to ensure this collection aligns with our corporate values, global citizenship, and sustainability guidelines.

***A call to the industry: we should do better.***

Consumers are demanding change, governments are enforcing stricter sustainability regulations, and the planet is running out of time. The fashion industry's waste problem is not a distant threat; it is a crisis that needs immediate action. Ralph Lauren is committed to making sustainability more than a trend. It is time for brands to step up, reduce waste, and take responsibility for its impact. Fashion should be timeless—not disposable.