Recycled Polyester (rPET) Round Table

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Summary of the Round Table

Over 150 attendees joined and contributed to our 2020 Recycled Polyester (rPET) Round Table Summit including representatives from brands, retailers, suppliers, non-profits, innovators, researchers, and recycling experts.

Six speakers presented on topics including:

- **Textile Exchange:**
  - Climate + Strategy and the role of the rPET Round Table in achieving the end goal of 45% reduced CO2 emissions from textile fiber and material production by 2030.
  - Proposed new 2025 rPET Challenge - under discussion with UNFCCC as a joined commitment.
    - A breakout session was held on this topic to receive industry input.
  - **Indorama Ventures PLC:** innovation in recycling technologies.
Accelerating Circularity: textile-textile recycling - managing commitments and feedstocks with emerging solutions and innovation.

The Microfiber Consortium: the need to quantify fiber fragmentation before innovating solutions around microfibers, shared strategic plans and focus areas, and insights on development around industry guidelines.

Priorities that were identified during the meeting, and which will feed into 2021 planning, include:

- Scalability to transition from bottle-to-textile to textile-to-textile recycling of polyester
- Challenges around collection, traceability, cost, and availability of feedstock to meet the proposed new industry rPET Challenge.
- Work against competing demands with packaging and food industry to make sense of the proposed new rPET Challenge.
- Pace of chemical recycling for both bottles and textiles.
- Investment into R&D and infrastructure development.
- Polyester garment recycling by region and its scope under recycled standards.

The key action to come out of Round Table Summit was to tweak and move forward with the proposed new rPET Challenge:

- The 2025 rPET Challenge serves as a cornerstone for change in the apparel and textile industry. Taking a two-pronged approach to drive the uptake of recycled polyester; first by asking brands and retailers to publicly commit to source a minimum of 50% percent of their polyester uptake from rPET by the year 2025; and second by asking the industry at large to commit replacing 100,000 metric tons of virgin polyester with recycled polyester by 2025.
- Companies will be required to report their polyester consumption to Textile Exchange’s Corporate Fiber and Materials Benchmark survey annually, which is how we track the progress across all participating brands towards the collective goal. (Textile Exchange’s Corporate Fiber & Materials Benchmark survey is entirely anonymous and aggregated across all annual report participants to show progress. No information will be singled out and published without your company’s explicit request or consent.)

Over the next year we will:

- Roll out the new 2025 rPET Challenge.
- Continue to conduct monthly meetings to keep up the momentum of knowledge sharing, integration of ideas, industry updates, demonstration of best practises, and more.
Over the next 5-10 years we will:

- Continue to facilitate and monitor progress towards the 2025 rPET Challenge.
- Focus our activities that will contribute to achieving Textile Exchange’s Climate+ strategic goal of 45% reduced CO2 emissions from textile fiber and material production by 2030.
- Improve education around rPET and circularity

We can achieve this by:

- Measuring the uptake of recycled polyester via Textile Exchange’s Corporate Fiber & Materials Benchmark program.
- Identify and prioritize project areas and create working groups to expand the scope and impact of the rPET Round Table.
- Leverage the power of this active, multi-stakeholder group to encourage best practises, innovations, and transformation in the industry.